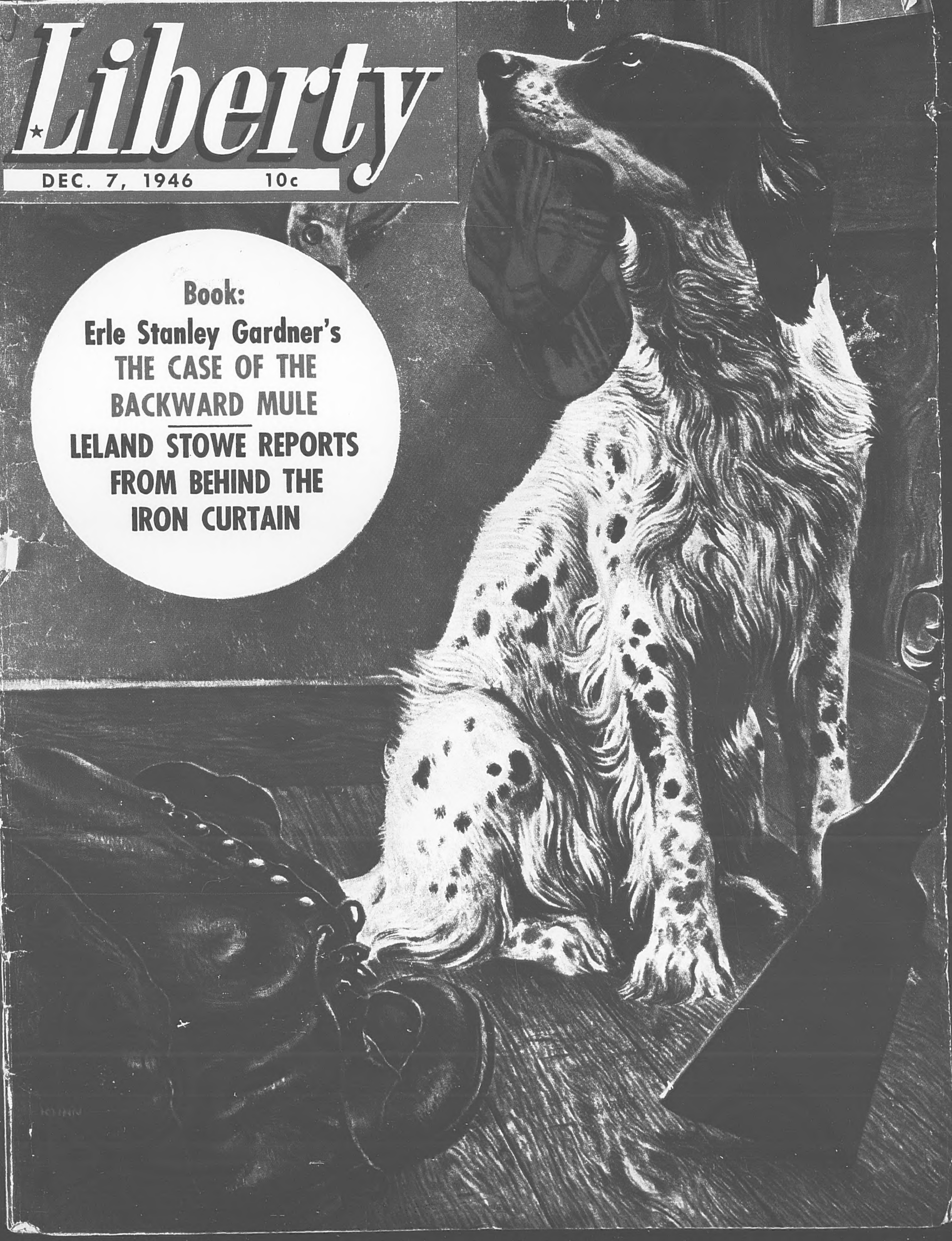
Liberty

DEC. 7, 1946 10c

Book:
Erle Stanley Gardner's
THE CASE OF THE BACKWARD MULE

LELAND STOWE REPORTS FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN



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Unconditionally Guaranteed For First User's Lifetime Without Repair Charges If Sent To Sheaffer Factory!

New Fineline SLEEVE TIP ○ Reduces Lead Breakage!

Any comparison you care to make will show you the superiority of Sheaffer's writing instruments—the bigger and stronger, 14-K cylindrical *Lifetime** POINT that distinguishes the "TRIUMPH" pen; the sleeve tip point of the Fineline pencil that reduces lead breakage to minimum. Both make writing easier, smoother, faster! Compare Sheaffer's quality . . . and judge for yourself.

CREST DE LUXE pen, $17.50; pencil, $6; complete set, $23.50. Federal excise tax additional. Other sets, $3.95 up. Complete range of Colors.

FOR A *Memorable* CHRISTMAS . . .

"TRIUMPH"

Pens and Fineline Pencils

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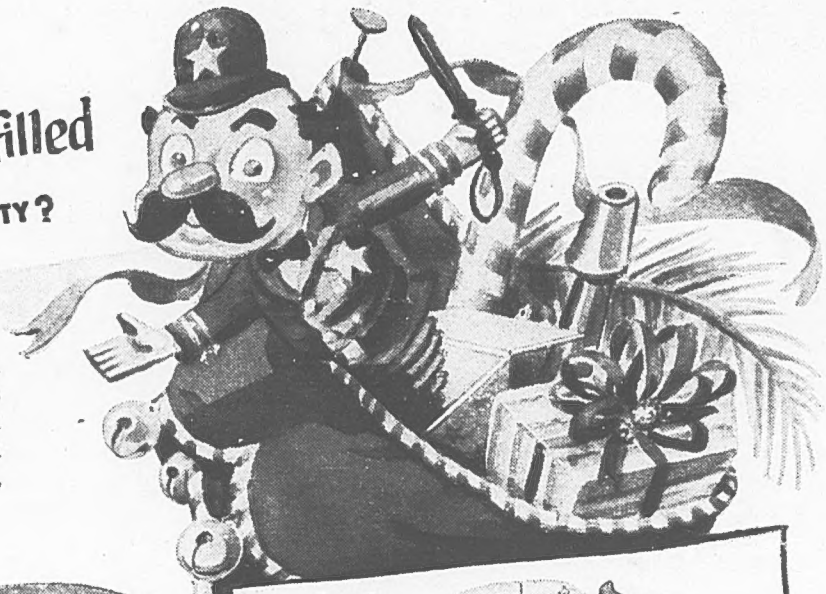
SHEAFFER'S

Finer Post-war Models Priced at Pre-war Levels

LISTEN EVERY SUNDAY to SHEAFFER'S PARADE with Carmen Cavallaro—*NBC Network:* 3 P.M. E.T.; 2 P.M. C.T.; 1 P.M. M.T.; 12 Noon P.T.

If only good little drivers got their Christmas stockings filled

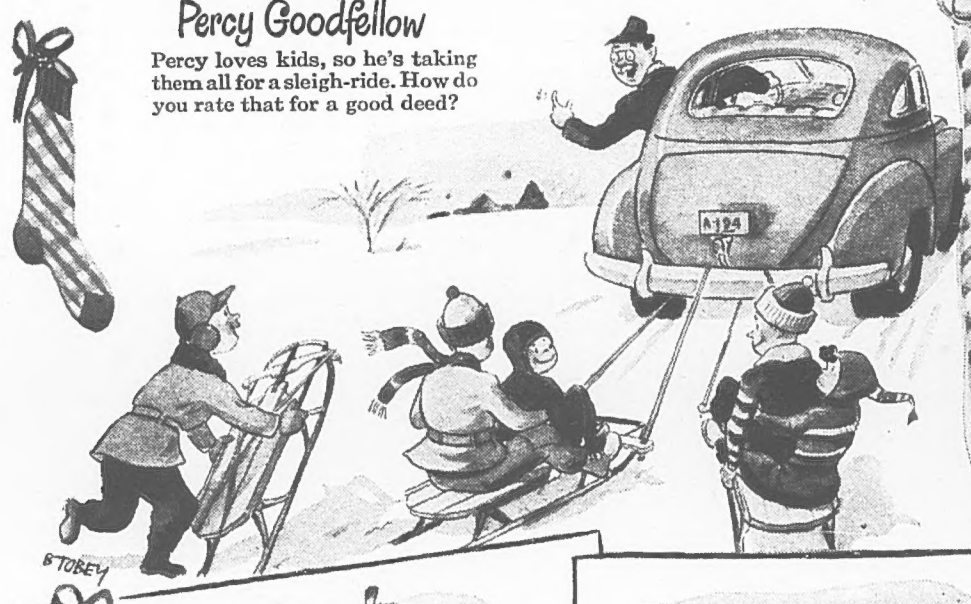
. . . WHICH OF THESE WOULD YOU LEAVE EMPTY?



They say that Santa keeps a record of good and bad little boys. If your name gets on his blacklist, it's just too bad for you at Christmas time. It might be a good idea to extend this system to include good and bad automobile drivers. For example, if you were Santa, how would you rate the drivers shown below?

Percy Goodfellow

Percy loves kids, so he's taking them all for a sleigh-ride. How do you rate that for a good deed?



Lucy Merryfeather

Lucy is just running into the store for a bit of last-minute shopping. That sedan with the door open is her car. Anything wrong?

Joe Lushwell

Joe actually has had only a couple of drinks, so he feels it's perfectly okay for him to drive. However, his brother Mike won't let him—even though he's likely to start an argument. How do you rate them?

Wilbur Happydays

Wilbur is getting gas. Is he doing anything that might earn him an empty Christmas stocking?

Oscar Snowbird

Oscar is taking the family over to Grandma's for dinner. Look closely before you decide what to do about his Christmas stocking.

CHECK YOUR RATING WITH THESE:

Percy should be spanked. Letting kids hitch their sleds to an automobile is dangerous. Every year dozens of children are seriously injured that way—but some people will never learn. A lump of coal is about the only thing he should get in his Christmas sock.

Lucy's heart is in the right place, but her car isn't. Double parking is a nuisance, a cause of accidents, and even Santa Claus won't forgive her.

Joe goes on the blacklist. Authorities have demonstrated that even a couple of drinks will slow up a driver's reactions. The wise rule to follow is: If you drink, don't drive; if you drive, don't drink. However, Mike deserves an extra-nice present for stopping Joe from driving and thus preventing a possible accident.

Wilbur thinks he's going to win our approval by buying Ethyl. But he isn't—lighting that cigar near the gas tank is bad business no matter how good the gasoline is—so an empty stocking for Wilbur.

Oscar also shouldn't expect too much in his Christmas stocking. There's snow on the ground. But where are Oscar's chains? In the car trunk—where they'll never prevent a skid.

FREE Christmas present to all car owners from Ethyl. A copy of "Professional Driving"—the 72-page book that is packed with information and help for automobile drivers. Not for beginners, but for people who already know how to handle a car. Written and illustrated by experts to make good drivers into better drivers.

Ethyl Corporation
Post Office Box 393, New York 8, N. Y.
Please send me a free copy of "Professional Driving."

*Name*_____
(Please Print)

*Address*_____

*City*_____ *State*_____

For Christmas—
a Kirsten
Kirsten "Radiator" Pipes in four sizes, $6, $8.50, $10, and $12.50. Kirsten Cigarette Holders, long or short, $2.50. At smart stores and shops everywhere.
★ Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

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Kirsten Pipe Limited, Vancouver, B. C., Canada

THE WORLD TODAY IN FACT AND FICTION

This Week's Liberty

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Painted by Bob Kuhn

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In cold or heat or snow or rain
You get there when you go by train

be Specific –
say "Union Pacific"

Dependability! That's one big advantage of traveling by train—by Union Pacific. Furthermore ... the air-conditioned comfort, restful sleep, room to roam, delightful meals ... all these and other features go to make your train trip a vacation in itself. Going to or from the West—go as the seasoned traveler goes. Take the road of relaxation ... Union Pacific.

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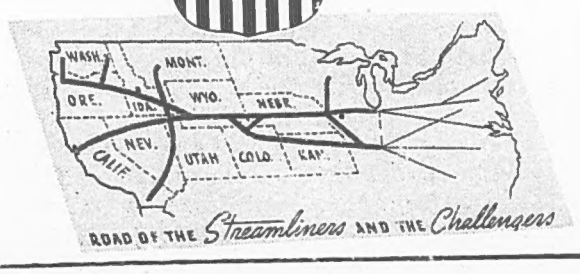
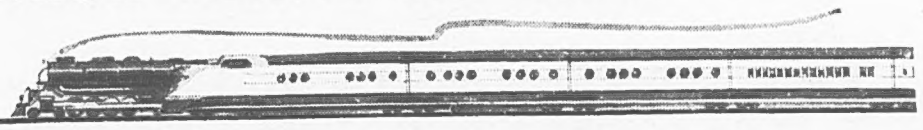
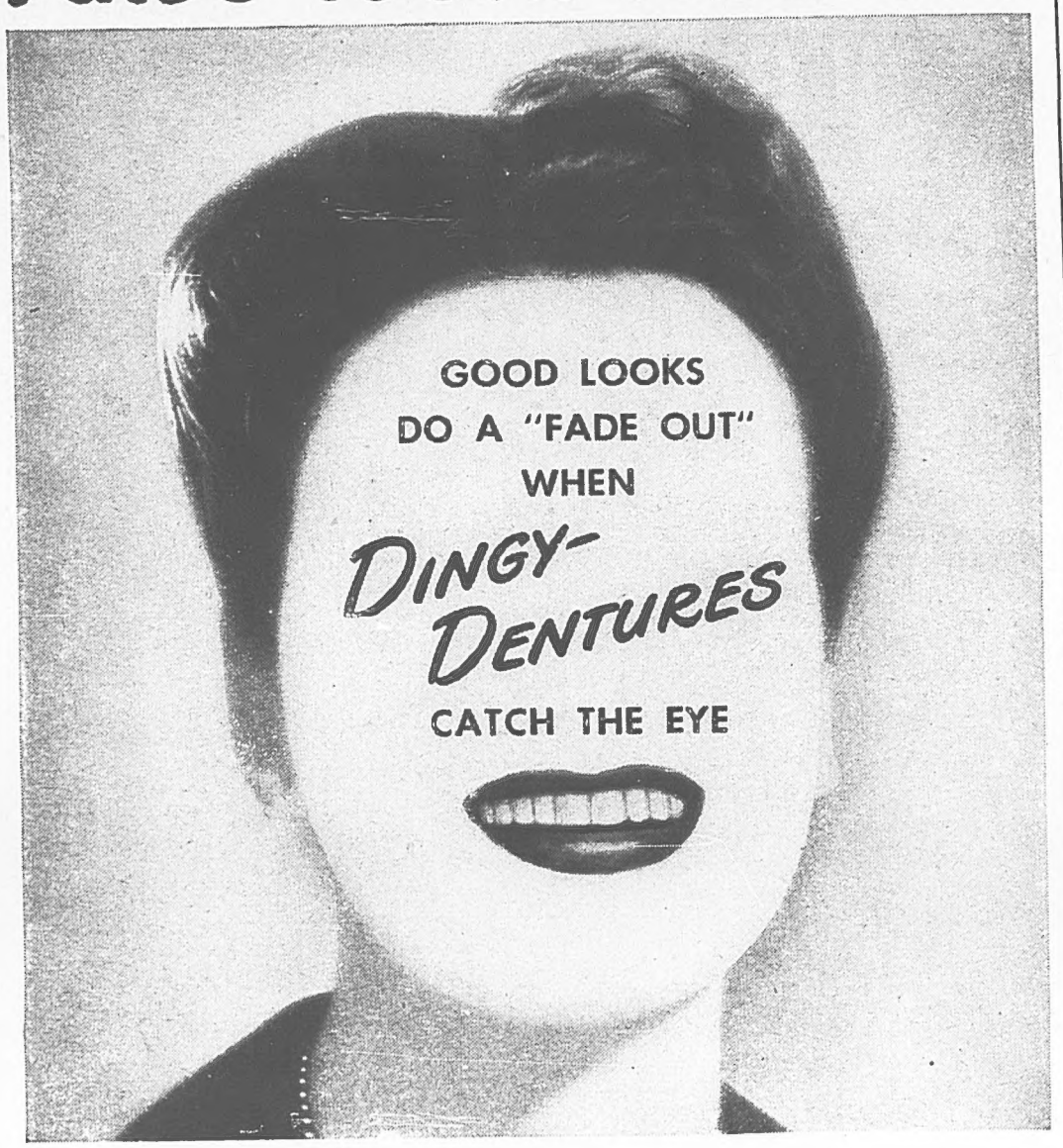


ROAD OF THE *Streamliners* AND THE *Challengers*

UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD



False Teeth Wearers



Keep Plates and Bridges CLEAN and BRIGHT This New, EASY Way

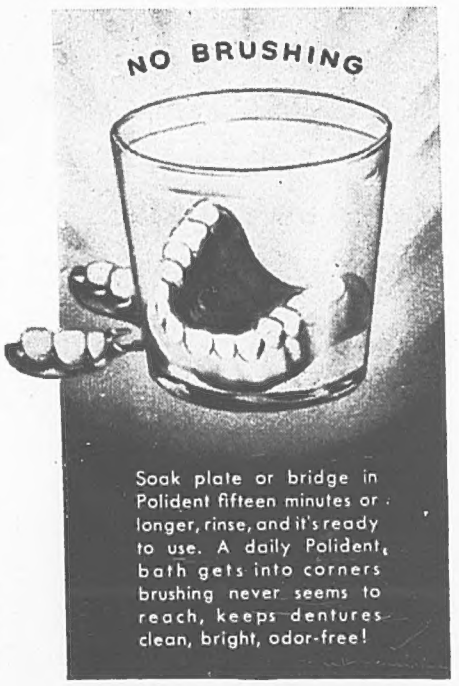
STAY LOVELY . . . when you smile. Keep your dental plate or bridge sparkling bright and hygienically clean with modern, *brushless* Polident.

Recommended by more dentists than any other denture cleanser, Polident is *so* easy to use, *so* sure, *so* safe! Just let your denture soak in Polident solution daily, 15 minutes, or overnight. No scrubbing! No brushing! No fear of dingy dentures . . . or of offensive DENTURE BREATH!

Polident soaks into tiny corners brushing never seems to reach. Inexpensive, too—it costs less than 1¢ a day to help maintain the original natural appearance of your plate or bridge.

Stay lovely when you smile. Try Polident, the *brushless* denture cleanser today!

Free! Generous package of Polident. Enough to use every day for two full weeks. Send name and address on penny postcard to—Hudson Products, Inc., 8 High Street, Dept. 306, Jersey City 6, N. J. Send for your free package today!


NO BRUSHING
Soak plate or bridge in Polident fifteen minutes or longer, rinse, and it's ready to use. A daily Polident bath gets into corners brushing never seems to reach, keeps dentures clean, bright, odor-free!

Use **POLIDENT** *Daily* TO KEEP PLATES AND BRIDGES CLEAN . . . AND ODOR-FREE!

VOX POP

"The Voice of the People"

FEARFUL FUTURE

SANTA MONICA, CALIF.—When I look around and see the number of cocktail bars and night clubs being constructed, I get somewhat fearful of the future of my country, and sometimes think that we are following the path described by Oliver Goldsmith in his verse:

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.

—*Leopold Stocker.*

NO SLOPPY STUFF

FUKUOKA, JAPAN—I'm slightly behind the times, but I just finished Arthur Mayse's story, Crazy Current (July 27). I really enjoyed it and would like to see more of that type of story. It's not the sloppy love story that would please a Sinatra fan, but it pleases the boys over here, and more of the same would be more than welcome.—*N. L. W. R.*

ESKIMO TERM?

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.—Is "raggle" an Eskimo term? In Boom Burg, by Charles Lanius (October 5), you mention "Bed-raggled native women," etc.—*Chet Crank.*

Blame the roaming hyphen. It should have been be-draggled.—VOX POP EDITOR.

BURNING RAGE

UVALDE, TEX.—This is a protest about the October 19 cover showing people burning autumn leaves. I'll hop on anyone who thinks that leaves should be burned, or that he has a right to burn them. How can Americans be taught more sense? The greatest menace that faces us today is depleted soils. The most inexcusable and most generally used way to destroy fertility of our soils is by applying a match to our leaves. —*Kernel J. A. Simpson.*

SOME JUMP

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.—In the first installment of Sneak Punch, by David Dodge (October 5), Joe Sundown, convicted of murder, is put on the train, the Owl, to go to San Quentin prison. He jumps the train near Salinas. That was some jump, since the Owl follows the San Joaquin Valley all the way north, while Salinas on the coast route is 200 miles west.—*A. Benns.*

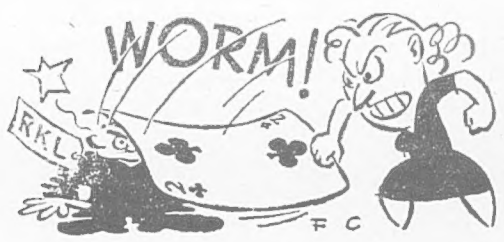
ANYTHING FOR A CHANGE

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Paul Hunter's editorial, Vote for Common Sense (November 2), in which he comes out for the Republicans, reminds me of a little item I read in the papers several weeks ago: "If the Republicans keep on doing what they're doing, they're going to elect the Democrats, no matter how hard the Democrats are trying to defeat themselves."

An argument for the Republicans based on the fact that the Democrats aren't any good isn't strong enough to convince me.—*John T.*

MENTAL COBWEBS

BOSTON, MASS.—Robert Keith Leavitt has started the blood percolating all over the place around here with his article, Bridge Is for Dummies (November 2). Mr. Leavitt



is obviously one of those dummies he mentions who can't fathom the mysteries of a game that stimulates the brain to a white heat. Bridge is one of the best methods I know of to get rid of mental cobwebs and to keep the cerebral machinery clicking.—*Dorothy P.*

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

CHICAGO, ILL.—While there are shortages here at home, it seems stupid to me for us to be exporting anything to foreign countries. Right now we can use all the cars, food, building materials, etc., that we can produce right here. Yet constantly you see and read about scores of such materials being sold for foreign consumption. It's O.K. to let outsiders in on any surplus goods, but until we get a surplus, we ought to take care of our own first.—*Bill Q.*

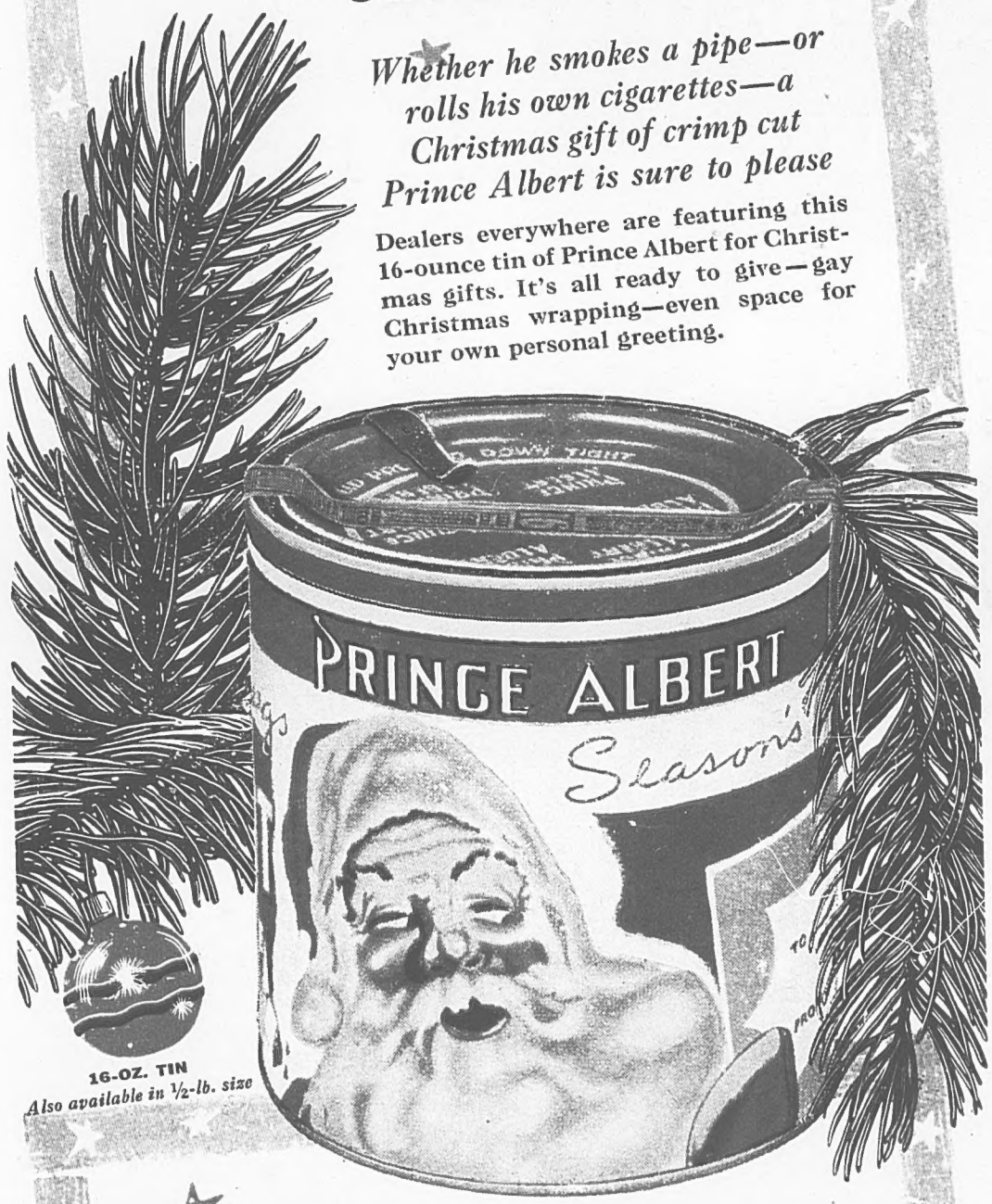
UPSTANDING TREACHERY?

PROVIDENCE, R. I.—Paul Hunter seems shocked in his editorial, Do We Guard Our Secrets Well? (October 19), as he notes the number of traitors in Canada who turned over secret information to the Soviet agents of espionage. But at least those traitors did it for a principle. They believed in Communism. That, to my mind, is a good bit more upstanding than the conventional treachery which turns purely on the size of a bankroll, and which has been going on since the beginning of time.—*Ralph P.*

PRINCE ALBERT
SMOKING TOBACCO

Whether he smokes a pipe—or rolls his own cigarettes—a Christmas gift of crimp cut Prince Albert is sure to please

Dealers everywhere are featuring this 16-ounce tin of Prince Albert for Christmas gifts. It's all ready to give—gay Christmas wrapping—even space for your own personal greeting.



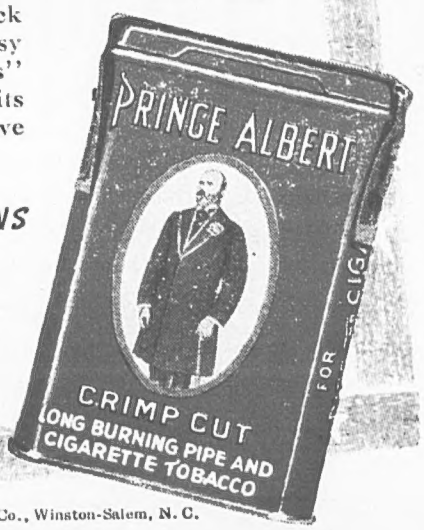
16-OZ. TIN
Also available in ½-lb. size

For pipes or roll-your-own cigarettes, there's no other tobacco quite like Prince Albert. It's crimp cut to pack better in a pipe, to draw smooth and easy—or to roll up fast and firm in a "makin's" cigarette. And P. A. has a mildness all its own—it's specially treated to remove bite... to smoke cool, rich, and tasty.

FOR PIPES OR ROLL-YOUR-OWNS

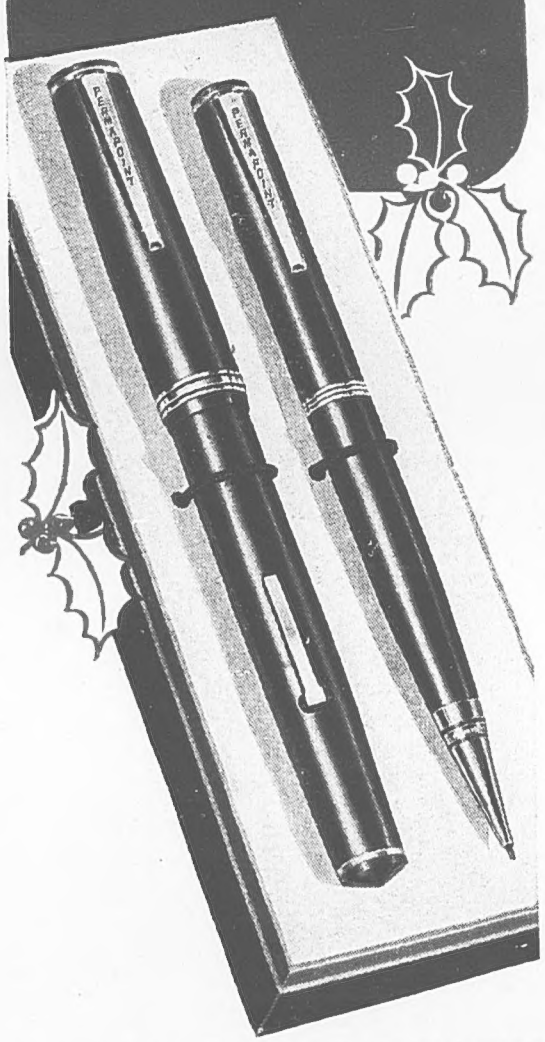
THE NATIONAL JOY SMOKE

ALSO IN POCKET SIZE



R. J. Reynolds Tob. Co., Winston-Salem, N. C.

EBERHARD FABER Suggests...



PERMAPOINT

Fountain Pen with Matching Pencil

...a Holiday gift with which to signify your special thoughtfulness. Smooth-gliding, iridium tipped Permapoint is a lasting delight. Remember, it's the Eberhard Faber pen that offers a complete renewal of point, plus a new rubber sac and ink feed at only a fraction of the original pen cost. A gift for genuine appreciation. Pen and Pencil Sets $2.25. Pens only $1.50.

LEADERSHIP IN FINE WRITING MATERIALS SINCE 1849

ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

Want a plane for business, not just for fun? That's the idea of the Waco Aristocraft . . . An Oscar-rating lightplane engine

OUT in the little town of Troy, Ohio, is an airplane builder by the name of Waco Aircraft Company. It never reached the dazzling heights of the big-time aviation companies and it never has had any ambition to be the biggest concern in the field. But through the years before the war it built reliable, sturdy single-engined private airplanes that carried the Waco name around the world.

The Wacos weren't the largest or fastest nor were they the smallest and slowest airplanes, but they won many sportsmen races and they have carried mail and served their purposes for traveling salesmen and personal pilots. Waco has always been a conservative company, taking its time and putting out a good product without a great deal of fanfare. Hugh Perry, the sale vice-president, has long been one of the calm, stable voices of the industry.

During the war Waco built troop-carrying gliders for the army—hundreds and thousands of them. The war news headlines went to the makers of bombers and fighters, but Waco made its important though less publicized contribution to the war effort.

Ever since the war Waco has been very quiet about its peacetime plans. Competition in the personal-plane field increased so much, especially in the price and speed range that Waco had occupied before the war, that it seemed a foregone conclusion Waco would not resume building its prewar types. But where could it go? The small two-place plane field was already crowded, and the market for faster and bigger airplanes was quite limited.

Waco has now come forth with its plans. Next February it will start producing a four-place general utility high-wing airplane featuring simplified controls and—this was quite a surprise—a pusher-type propeller in the tail. It has named its new model the Aristocraft.

We haven't talked with Hugh Perry about the goal Waco is seeking with its new model, but we can surmise that after a great deal of study by engineers and market analysts, the company decided the time had come to offer a plane built for utility transportation rather than something for "just flying."

It can be said very frankly that Waco's postwar plans are among the most encouraging signs on the personal-plane horizon. Waco is after the business man and the corporation. And in the final analysis, it is this *utility* field that holds the most long-range promise. Recreational use of airplanes is fine—flying is a great sport—but the real future of the small airplane is wrapped up in its ordinary day-to-day usefulness.

The new Waco has many interesting features. First of all is the simplified controls which, to date, are being used only in the two-place Ercoupe and the Aeronca Chum. "Simplified controls" means that the airplane operates much like an automobile. You can't spin the craft or zoom around free as a bird, but such controls mean easier and often safer operation for the man who just wants to get somewhere by air.

The pusher feature is novel. The engine is mounted in the nose, but the propeller is in the tail and connected to the engine by an extended drive shaft. The 84-inch Hartzell propeller features variable pitch and

(*Continued on page 50*)

A preview of Waco Aristocraft, four-place, built for safe and sound day-to-day use.

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

A CORRESPONDENT'S life is full of surprises, and Leland Stowe got one this fall when he returned to Europe and found the suitcase he had lost five years ago in Yugoslavia, stored away at the American Embassy in Hungary. One of the more serious results of his trip is the penetrating article, BLUE DANUBE—OR RED? on page 11. Mr. Stowe, correspondent, lecturer, and author, is a leading authority on world affairs. He has met many important people during two decades of chasing across five continents, but the most important—to him—is his wife. She was a dentist in Worcester, Massachusetts, when he was assigned to do a feature about her. She was opposed to publicity, but he persisted, got the story—and her.

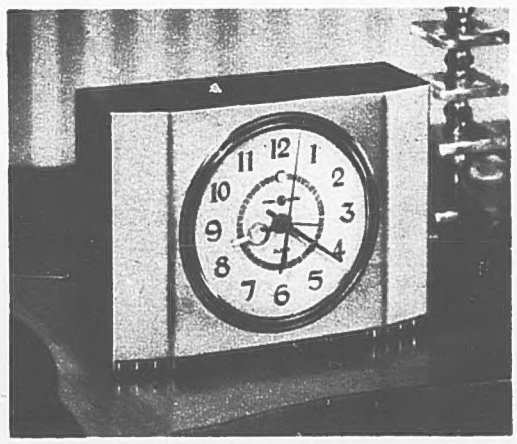
FROM FACT TO FICTION

ONCE, when Joseph Harrington was a cub reporter, a famous European graphologist read his handwriting. "You won't be a reporter long," the seer said. "I see you as a great editor." Eighteen years later Harrington substituted as assistant city editor and was shifted back to his typewriter after two days. Soon after, he quit the newspaper game and began writing fiction. "I don't invent characters and situations," he says: "I only embroider on the facts—and what reporter doesn't do that?" Now, at forty-two, he's married, has two children, lives on a farm in Connecticut—and has no faith whatsoever in graphology. His latest short story, FORTY WORDS, is on page 12.

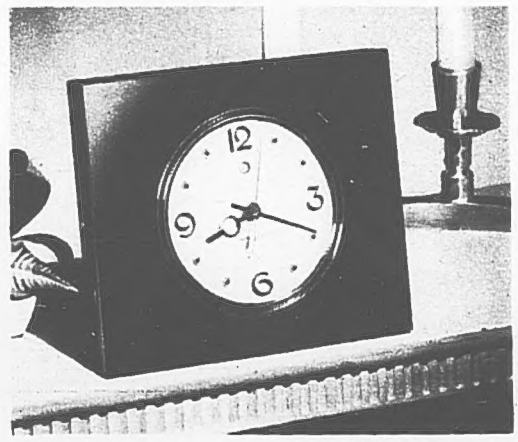
NEXT WEEK

WHAT shall we teach our children? Francis Rufus Bellamy gives a realistic answer to this most vital question of our times in LET'S STOP KIDDING OUR CHILDREN.... Samuel W. Taylor's BEGUILING GUEST is an amusing tongue-in-cheek yarn of a man who wasn't cut out to be a father. . . . Liberty's Book Condensation, THE DIM VIEW, by Basil Heatter, is the story of a great love which gave one man the courage to fight once more.

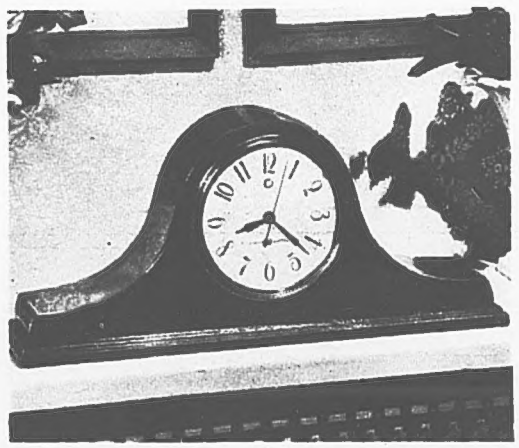
For your "Preferred List"—
A useful, decorative
G-E Clock!



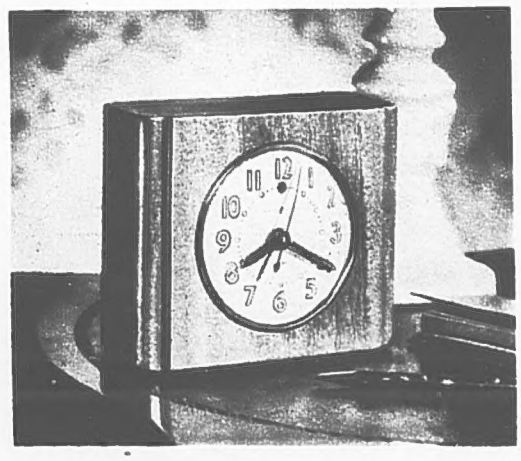
The MORNING GLORY—The perfect alarm, yet handsome enough to use as an occasional clock! A metal case flawlessly cast with a soft, satin-like, "butler silver" finish and fluted brass feet. A melodious yet positive bell alarm.



The CANDLELIGHT—The clock for modern-minded people! Its case is of sparkling, jewel-like black glass—polished to permanent, shimmering elegance. Easel back. (Also available in brown East Indian lambskin and brown pigskin.)



The PRISTINE—The small, inexpensive mantel clock in brown mahogany finish with white dial and black numerals. Ideal for small mantels, it is decorative—and dependable as only a G-E Electric Clock can be.



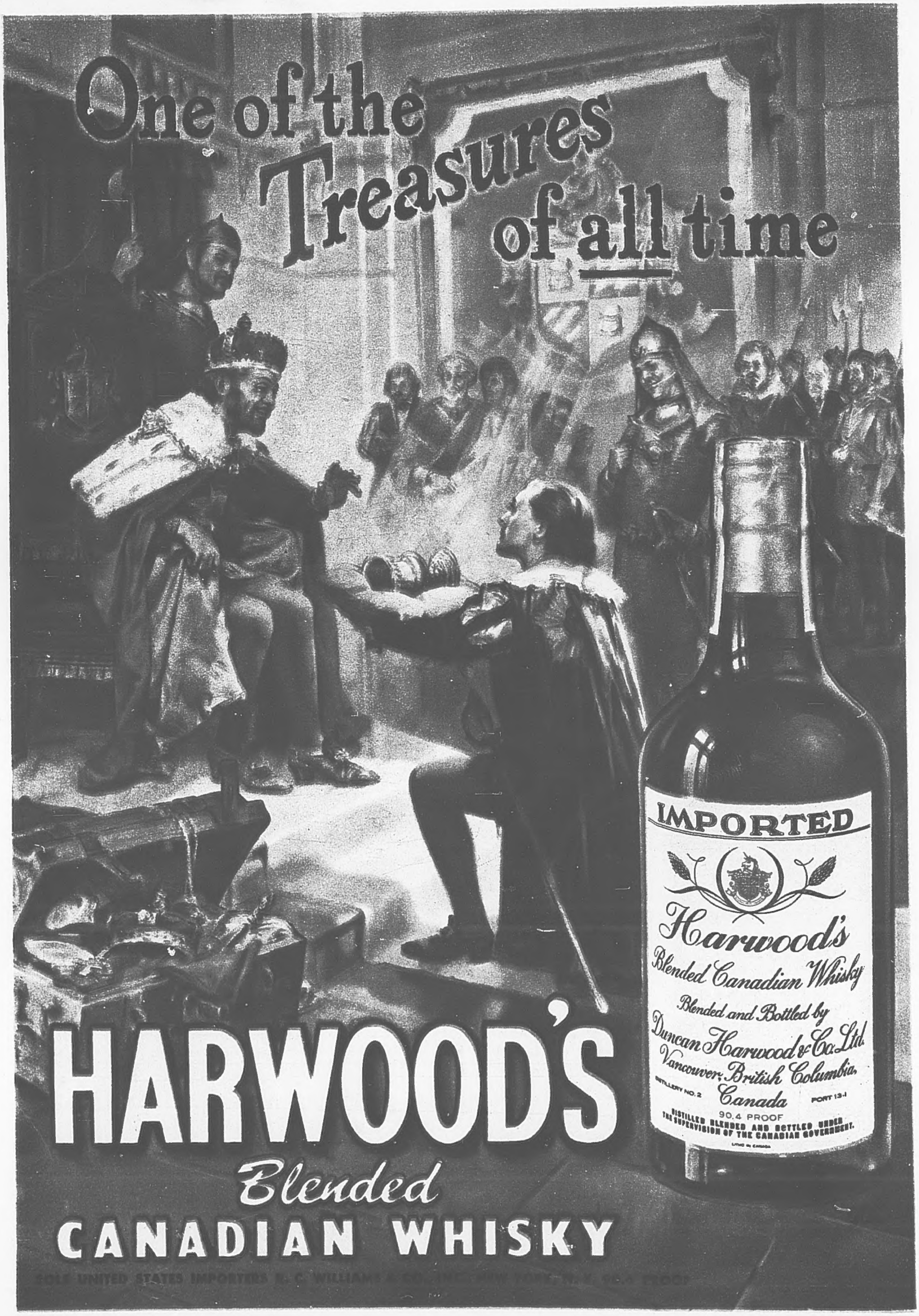
The GAY HOUR—With new "Select-A-Larm" feature—*volume control!* Light sleepers set control to "whisper." Run-of-mill sleepers set it to "call." Heavy sleepers select "shout." Every sleeper gets the "wake-up" he wants!

THE CHRISTMAS CLOCKS MOST PEOPLE WANT!

Surveys show G-E Electric Clocks are the clocks *most people want*, for these reasons: (1) Self-starting—just plug in. (2) No winding. (3) Accurate, dependable, sealed-in-oil mechanism. General Electric Company, Bridgeport 2, Conn.

General Electric Clocks

GENERAL ELECTRIC


One of the Treasures of all time
IMPORTED
Harwood's
Blended Canadian Whisky
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Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

The Danube at Budapest. Its 1,700 miles provide a vital commercial link between seven countries and the world.

Blue Danube—or Red?

BY LELAND STOWE

Vienna.

THE historic mansion in which Johann Strauss composed The Beautiful Blue Danube eighty years ago now serves as headquarters of the Communist Party in Vienna's second district. There seems to be a strangely appropriate symbolism in this fact. For Johann Strauss, through the magic of his music, changed the Danube's actual murky gray-brown color to a beautiful blue in the eyes of the world. And the Communists, through a very different magic, are determined to change its color again—to red.

The Danube is not only the Mississippi of all Europe; a vast international river system is also a mighty weapon. In its twisting descent of more than 1,700 miles—from western Bavaria down to the Black Sea, far to the southeast—it flows through or touches seven different countries. To dominate this king of European rivers, physically and politically, is no simple task. If the Soviets can monopolize the Danube as far west as Passau, on the Austro-German frontier, they will have won a battle as tremendous as Stalingrad. Soviet control of the lower three fourths of the Danube would clinch Soviet domination of eastern Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Rumania.

On this issue President Truman has fixed ideas. He believes that a great international river should remain open for truly international shipping operations. British and French ships plied the Danube in the past. So the British and French strongly support the American position. All three of these powers participate with the Soviets in occupying Austria, and the key stretch of the Danube—from Vienna through Linz up to Passau—is also in Austria. This makes the struggle over the Danube's future status a real free-for-all.

The battle for the Danube is a battle for ships, shipping companies, and their facilities. Uncle Sam grabbed one trump card when our forces seized about one third of the Danube shipping fleet (some 700 ships) in our Austrian and Bavarian zones. From Hungary on down, the Soviets appropriated everything they found in their zones. They demanded that the American turn over the ships held by them, as part of Russia's due in reparations from the Danubian countries. The Russians especially claimed the great Austrian shipping firm, the DDSG ,(Danau DampfSchiffahrts Gesellschaft). They insisted that DDSG—the biggest and oldest operator on the Danube—was German-owned instead of Austrian, and therefore a reparations prize for the Soviets. Both Uncle Sam and the Austrian government turned thumbs down. That brought about the deadlock which has "frozen" shipping on the upper Danube for the past eighteen months. It cripples communications and trade. It seriously retards recovery in central Europe. But the stake is very big—a Red Danube or a free one.

Whatever power wins control of the Austrian Danube must win the Danube in the end. Hence, control of Austria's (and the Danube's) biggest shipping firm, the DDSG, is the critical objective in the struggle.

It began in February, 1946, when a Soviet major placed a guard around the DDSG main office build-

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The facts behind the fateful struggle with Russia for control of Europe's Mississippi, and what that control will mean

"The waiting is hell. We have three minutes of it—the chap who's coming has had a year or more of it."

FORTY WORDS

The beautiful Mrs. Robert Alding.

• • • in which to tell the awful story of a man's betrayal

BY JOSEPH HARRINGTON

ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR KALIN

ROBERTSON stood on the wide concrete steps and watched the smoke coming out of the squat building in short black puffs.

He asked the friendly young turnkey about it.

"That's the powerhouse."

"Oh! Working up current?"

"That's all it does."

"Can they see that from Death Row?"

"Sure."

The new phrase leaped full-blown into Robertson's mind: *All afternoon the condemned man, staring out his window, saw the powerhouse busily jetting black smoke—generating the power that was to burn his life out.* Neat. Good.

Carelessly, so the turnkey wouldn't mention it to other newspapermen, he said, "Must give the man a nasty feeling—stoking up the fires to make the juice for him."

"Oh, that juice isn't for him," the turnkey scoffed. "Shucks, how much do you think it takes to kill a man? Matter of fact, we don't use any of that juice. We got a little Diesel right in the death house, and that does the trick."

"Does it smoke?"

"Never saw it smoke."

Another blank. Robertson had been drawing nothing but blanks since he got this assignment.

Lewis, his city editor, had lifted him up to the clouds. "Robertson!" he had shouted from his desk. Before then, whenever he wanted an unimportant reporter for an unimportant assignment he had shouted, "Hey, you!" And when Robertson came over: "What's your name again? Well, go and . . ."

This time he had said, "Robbie—how'd you like to cover the Alding execution?"

"Ald— Why—that would be fine, chief." He hoped Lewis wouldn't notice that the name had meant nothing to him.

"Here." He shoved a letter to Robertson. "Get there early. Sometimes the best part of the story is who comes to see the chap on the last day. Maybe his sweetheart, maybe his old mother. Who knows? I'll try you out on this one, Robbie."

Robertson reeled out of the city room in an ecstasy. He read the letter in the hall. It was addressed to Mr. Henry Robertson, the Metropolitan Star:

Dear Sir:

In accordance with the law, you are hereby invited to witness the execution by electricity of Robert Alding at 10 P.M., Wednesday, November 27. Kindly bring this letter with you and present it not later than 9.30 that evening.

Yours truly,
HARRY SINCLAIR.
(*Warden*)

So Lewis had noticed his work after all! He knew when a young reporter had promise, even if he pretended not to notice.

Robertson went down to the morgue, a dim, dusty room, the repository of countless clippings.

"The clips on Robert Alding," he commanded. "All the envelopes."

The clerk, a weary, gray man, opened one of the steel drawers.

"Sure you want 'em *all*, Mr. Robertson?"

"Every one." He'd read every clip, too, if it took all night. He'd know the Alding case inside out when he stepped into the death house.

The gray clerk plucked out one thoroughly flat envelope, tossed it on the green counter. He grinned. "There you are, Mr. Robertson."

It took Robertson all of seven

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Robert Alding, indicted for murder.

Robertson sought the inside story.

AL TAKES A PO DER

ILLUSTRATED BY LAWRENCE BUTCHER

Miss Pike blows her top, and wham! Roughly, fifty per cent of the Shadow Orchard curriculum socks Beanie.

To Freddy's love troubles add those of his girl's kid brother—and subtract Al, the drugstore Mr. Anthony

BY EDWIN RUTT

WERE I inditing epaulet for the headstone of Frederick Sandford (self), I might with becoming modesty settle for this brief, and ironic, passage: *His was a great-heartedness—which backfired.*

For around Shadow Orchard, New York, the incorporated village of my nativity, it is common knowledge that I stand ever ready to stretch the helping hand toward friends in misfortune. But how many of my compatriots, plodding their unthinking paths, realize that ofttimes these Good Samaritan impulses whirl me to the brink of Tragedy, likewise Ruin?

I cite an instance.

This Saturday morning business is not brisk at Schofield & Sons, the real-estate organization enjoying my services after I forsake the army. Wherefore I saunter up to Al's Soda Bar.

A word anent the solid man guiding the destinies of this institution. Al is a savant beside whose statue those of Aristotle, Erasmus, and suchlike loose thinkers pale into insignificance. He could also be termed a one-man library concerning Shadow Orchard and populace. Furthermore, he has lent trifling assistance upon occasions when I have difficulties with my girl, one Constance Parker, a tomato of the ash-blonde variety with eyes strictly out of the Mediterranean.

But today I do not require Al's help and sympathy, on account the Sandford-Parker romance purrs along like a sweet-natured sewing machine. I am come but to refuel at this oasis. On the threshold, however, I stop—dumfounded.

Slumped broodingly over the fountain is young Horace (Beanie) Parker, Connie's kid brother. This twelve-year-old party has a somber freckled visage and much in common with Ivan the Terrible. But now his attitude suggests extreme dejection. At his elbow languishes a hot fudge sundae, practically intact.

It is this circumstance that fathers my astonishment. Ordinarily the life expectancy of a foodstuff set before Beanie is laughable.

"What—" I begin. But Al waves for silence.

"Come, Horace," Al twists his mustache, which tends to flow south, "try just a spoonful!"

"Nah," Beanie squirms. "Don't feel like it."

"Horace, Freddy," Al fixes me with unfathomable expression, "is not in his usual form. And the sundae on the house, at that."

I blink. Here, possibly, is the millennium.

"Well, what do you know!" I says. "By the way, Beanie, why aren't you in the elementary school?" I forget it's Saturday.

Beanie lifts a face like an indisposed sheep. "Ya-aah, shedd up, Freddy Sandford," he croaks.

"Is that a way," I says sternly, "to address your elders? I— Ha! Don't stand there mooning, Al! Give with a Grape Golconda!"

Despite its florid-sounding name, the Grape Golconda subtly blends the pastel shades. In shallow dish, establish scoop each vanilla, pistachio, banana ice cream. Smother lavishly with butterscotch syrup. Garnish with marshmallow. Sprinkle nuts over edifice. Crown with halves of white grapes, suitably seeded, couchant upon ice-cream mounds.

Galvanized by my tone, Al ducks into the groove. But ere I can wield spoon, Beanie gulps alarmingly. Then—the bane of Shadow Orchard's Board of Education totters weakly out of the soda bar.

Nonplused, I gaze at Al. "What's his trouble?" I inquires.

Al shakes his head sadly. "Lamour, Freddy. Two-jaws Lamour, as they say in Paris."

"What?" I stare. "You mean that young whippersnapper is having a—an affair of the heart?"

"Freddy," says Al, "we live in an age of speed and high pressure, with the world rocketing the Lord knows where. This accelerated pace appears to affect even the—ah, recently-out-of-rompers set. In short, Horace considers little Natalie Pike definitely atomic."

IT takes me a second to place La Pike. Then I remember. A stringy arrangement, all curls, calf eyes, and long legs. The last time I see her, she rolls a hoop.

"My gosh!" I explains. "That kid's a sucker for a middy blouse."

"You forget, Freddy," Al says, "that lately you spent considerable time in Italy to—as you are fond of relating — the confusion of Field Marshal Kesselring. During your absence, such as Horace and Natalie Pike began growing up."

"O.K.," I says. "But it's hard to believe. In former days, when confronted by a tidbit, Beanie Parker could make a bum out of a Siberian wolf."

Al nods. "Potentially, Horace's digestion is a thing to conjure with. But his infatuation for Miss Pike has destroyed his appetite."

"Well, heck," I says, "if Beanie has a yen for this little cookie, what's stopping him?"

"Wiltshire Cadbury," Al informs me.

"Wilt who?"

"Freddy," says Al, "while you upheld Democracy, a Mr. Montgomery Cadbury purchased a home in the vicinity. Mr. Cadbury boasts a son—Wiltshire, thirteen."

"Snap this up, Al!" I commands.

THE scholar pulls his chin. "Well," he says, "the crux of the situation is: Horace, together with Natalie Pike and Wiltshire Cadbury, attends the Misses Sawyer's Dancing and Deportment Classes. Now there is to be a cotillion marking the seasonal termination of the—er—terpsichorean activities. And Horace and Wiltshire Cadbury have both bespoke Natalie as partner."

"Ah," I says, "the infernal triangle."

"Quite so," Al nods. "Confidentially, Freddy, my sympathies lie with Horace. But I fear I back a losing horse. Horace is an admirable character, plainspoken and with heart of gold. But women often bypass such sterling qualities in favor of more glittery attributes."

"In other words," I says, "for Nat Pike's dough, Beanie is a tramp?"

"Succinctly stated, Freddy," says Al; "though at present Miss Pike is still making up her mind. But she will indubitably elect Wiltshire. Wiltshire is practically a concentrate of the social graces."

"So!"

"The boy," proceeds Al reflectively, "might loosely be termed a smooth apple. Particularly as regards Womanhood. His is a fluent, flattering tongue; he anticipates feminine wants and whims; he rigidly bars coarse boorish conduct."

"Uh-huh," I says. "Beanie's licked before he leaves the dressing room."

"Precisely," says Al. "Moreover, Wiltshire Cadbury is personally prepossessing and solvent financially, due to an indulgent father. He is able to shower Miss Natalie with lavish gifts. Whereas, fiscally speaking, Horace cuts no great figure. Even now I hold his note in the amount of one dollar and thirty-five cents."

"You're very phlegmatic about this, Al," I remarks.

He spreads hands. "What can I do? Manifestly, Wiltshire Cadbury carries too many guns for Horace."

I am silent, cogitating. "Listen," I says finally. "I admit that Beanie retards Civilization. Nevertheless he is my prospective brother-in-law. As such he deserves consideration."

"Now, Freddy," Al looks nervous, "I'm very busy and due to take inventory, and--"

"Stop gibbering, Al!" I interrupts. "You're never too busy to soak up

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The chief of a great news-gathering organization answers Russian critics of our newspapers and tells how we can free the world press

PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

The citizen living in a country where there is no freedom of the press has been deprived of his "right to know," says Kent Cooper.

Does America Have a Free Press?

By KENT COOPER

Executive Director, the Associated Press

WHAT is freedom of the press? In America this is hardly considered a controversial question. Freedom of the press is one of the fundamentals of our liberty, an inalienable right secured for the American people in the First Amendment to the Constitution. The founders of our country fully realized that freedom of the press is one of the inseparable tenets of democracy.

But the American concept of a free press has been seriously disputed. Not all countries see eye to eye with us on what constitutes freedom. Now is the time to re-examine and to clarify our definitions and to consider what part press freedom may play not only in our own country but in world peace and in world salvation.

It is the Russians who disagree most strongly with our traditional concept of a free press. They are firmly of the opinion that the press in the United States is under the thumb of capitalism, that it is a slave to its wealthy owners, its advertisers, and to the claims of big business. Americans, on the other hand, are even more firmly of the opinion that the Soviet press is a propaganda organ which, because of its government control, prints only the official government point of view on any given issue.

It is true that the American press is to a large extent run as a big business. The press is a quasi-public service which must operate within a competitive capitalistic system. A newspaper must meet expenses and be run by business methods. But the reason for the existence of the press in the first place is to benefit the people. The press was guaranteed its freedom under the Constitution so that it could serve and inform the people.

It must not be forgotten that the controlling pressure on any publication comes from its readers, if these readers are at liberty to criticize and express their views. The kind of press which we have in America does not, therefore, owe its continuing existence to capitalist owners but to the support of its readers who thus render it free and independent. A free press is not a franchise granted to individuals, vesting them with special privileges over the people, but rather an instrument to ensure a free flow of information which is the backbone of American democracy.

As an instrument of information the printed word ranks first, superseding in importance all other forms of factual communication. In this country over 60 per cent of the people depend upon newspapers for their information about what is going on in the world, and the remaining 40 per cent read newspapers at one time or another. Both the radio and the motion picture reach large audiences and both mediums bring news information to the public. However, the primary function of both of these mediums is entertainment and their news function is merely incidental. The press is the greatest

single social power in the modern world and in one way or another influences most of the people.

It would certainly be foolish as well as untrue to claim that American newspapers and their owners have always been and remain unanimously idealistic, altruistic, and unbiased. There were battles to be fought to maintain and establish press freedom in this country. The careers of Lovejoy and Zenger give ample testimony to this fact. And even today there are faults and abuses which exist in the American press. The important thing is that readers everywhere in this country have the right to read conflicting opinions. They are never deprived of their "right to know."

LABOR, which frequently feels slighted and misinterpreted by the press, can fight the "press lords" through newspapers of its own to ensure that both sides of the question will be presented to Labor's satisfaction. In this country the circulation of labor journals alone within the last five years has been quoted at approximately 8,000,000. And there is an active liberal press in this country which is always ready and willing to bring to the people's attention facts or opinions which have been neglected or glossed over by the more reactionary newspapers.

Even though a rich newspaper publisher might attempt to use his newspaper to further his own interests, there is no way in which he can control other newspapers which are perfectly able and most eager to publish the opposite side of the story.

The Russians believe that theirs is the only free press because it is not owned by individuals but is the voice of the people. They advance a strong argument in favor of their own press which, they say, is truly representative because its government ownership leaves it free from the influences and considerations of private capital. The voice of the people, which finds expression in the newspapers of the Soviet, issues from the throat of the government and it has only the government's story to tell. Opinion is carefully held in line by editorials which adhere strictly to government policy. Performance may occasionally be criticized in the Russia press, but policy is inviolate.

At the conclusion of his speech on voting procedure at the Paris peace conference on last August 6, Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, after denying Russian Foreign Minister Molotov's charges of selfish U. S. motives, said, "I am entirely willing to leave the record . . . to be judged by you [Molotov] and by public opinion. . . . In the United States we have a free press. Therefore the Soviet representative can be sure that his charges impugning the motives of the United States have been published today in the United States press." He went on to say in reference to Molotov, "I challenge him to secure or permit publication in the Soviet Union of the statement I have now made."

Molotov's reply to the speech made by Byrnes contained an attack on the press trusts and monopolies existing in America, but he said, "We accept the challenge that was extended by the American representative. Let him give us his text. We will publish it and we will leave Soviet readers free to read and judge the situation."

THE text of the Byrnes speech was duly published in the Russian press. A few days later Russian newspapers returned to their customary practice of printing Molotov's conference statements at length and ignoring statements made by representatives of the western powers. American statesmen are used to having their actions and words recorded in the press, and in the case of a dispute the American public learns both sides of the story. It took a public challenge which could hardly have been ignored to give the Russian people the opportunity on this single occasion to read both sides of a dispute in which Russia was involved.

(*Continued on page 50*)

NEW YORK TIMES PHOTO

The New York Times city room: sixty per cent of our people depend on newspapers to tell them what is going on in the world.

DARKNESS — Our Worst Killer

Our Model-T street and highway lighting system will cost us 30,000 lives a year by 1950 unless we do something about it

By DAVID BROWN

ONLY a few minutes before, Dr. Philip Leavenworth had brought a new life into the world. Now he was driving cautiously toward Cleveland's Cuyahoga River bridge. With luck, he would be home before his two-year-old daughter Sarah fell asleep.

But Sarah had seen her father for the last time. Police found his body trapped in his car beneath the Cuyahoga's icy waters. Mistaking a dead-end street for the ramp to the bridge, he had crashed through a flimsy barricade into the river. His befuddlement was understandable — *with only the feeble glow of a single street lamp to guide him.*

On another road, near Houston, a twenty-three-year-old college student was driving with particular caution. By his side was a slim dark-haired girl who was to become his bride the next afternoon —and would have, *had there been two, or perhaps three, more lights* on a bridge which one Houston newspaper had aptly tagged "The Kiss of Death."

Such deaths are more than isolated personal tragedies. They are part of a pattern of avoidable carnage which is the shame of the nation. More than twelve thousand persons will be killed on the highways this year simply because people cannot see in the dark.

They cannot see because America's street-lighting systems are hopelessly antiquated. Most of them were designed for the Model-T traffic of twenty years ago. Automobiles are twice as fast as they were then. Traffic is five thousand times greater. But lighting, in the opinion of most experts, is one fifth to one tenth of barest safety needs.

That explains why half the accidents and more than 60 per cent of the nation's enormous traffic death toll take place at night—when only a fourth as many cars are on the road as during the day.

The hope of the country lies in what towns like Greensburg, Pennsylvania, have accomplished. Eight years ago rising nighttime traffic fatalities, burglaries, and other crimes made Greensburg citizens afraid of the dark.

The city fathers decided to do something. They surveyed every street in town and classified it according to the lighting needed.

Utility engineers whipped up a lighting plan. It was a great plan, the city fathers agreed, but it would have to be accomplished over a period of five years because of the expense.

Then someone proposed that a sample of the new lighting be set up on the main thoroughfare. No sooner was it done than citizens demanded that the new lights be installed immediately, and damn the cost.

They got action—and lights. And the cost was a surprise. For its old street-lighting system Greensburg spent $1.30 a year per person. The new system cost $1.95. Taking into account the lives, limbs, and property saved, the new system was cheap.

In Hartford, Connecticut, the city kept records of every death, injury, and accident involving more than twenty-five dollars damages both before and after relighting a ten-mile stretch of street. Savings have exceeded the cost of relighting. And deaths have been reduced from thirty-two to one.

It's the same story in Los Angeles. There twenty-five "suicide corners" were taking a toll of lives night after night. "Put up sodium lights" city officials ordered. A few months after the twenty-five intersections were bathed in the bright yellow glow, collision dived 75 per cent and deaths were cut to almost nothing.

Lighting experts still vividly recall the dimout days when New York's streets were referred to as "the bowling alleys of death, with pedestrians the tenpins."

Yet the dimout has never been lifted in most of America. Half the 2,500,000 street lights in the country are 100 candle power or less. And half their feeble power is wasted on the trees and the sky.

"The tragic thing about our streets," a lighting authority in New York declares, "is that with effective use of *the light they already have*, fatalities probably can be cut eighty per cent."

They were in Manitowoc, Wisconsin! Five hundred-watt lamps mounted fourteen feet above the ground used to light Manitowoc's main street, only they didn't really light up even the surface of the street. Engineers, *using the same 500-watt lamps*, installed luminaires, or optical globes, twenty two feet above ground. With all the light concentrated downward, street illumination was doubled.

On all but a thousand miles of America's highways, however, headlights are the best lights the motorist has. *Yet most headlights can't spot a pedestrian in time to prevent him from being struck down and run over.*

Only brighter highways, towns, and cities, warn the safety experts, will roll back the frightful toll exacted nightly by darkness —our worst killer. That toll, if the present rate continues, will be 30,000 deaths and nearly a million injuries a year by 1950.

THE END

Britain's Mulatto "G.I." Babies

An elderly Negro minister helps alleviate the tragedy of unwanted children born to English girls and Negro American soldiers

BY ALFRED ERIS

BLACK STAR PHOTOS

The colored child is one of 600 in Britain today. Pastor Ekarte is their self-appointed guardian.

PUT thousands of young soldiers, their pockets bulging with money, into a virtually manless city notorious for its slums. You don't need second sight to predict a sharp rise in its illegitimacy rate.

The city is Liverpool. The soldiers were American Negro troops. And the result—hundreds of unmistakably Negro waifs, ruined lives, and a few murder-and-suicide tragedies in the broken homes of returning Liverpool servicemen.

You can't blame the American Negros. Treated for the first time in their lives "like white folks," it is hardly surprising that some of them acted just as some of our white American troops were acting in other English communities.

You shouldn't judge the Liverpool girls too severely, either. Their own men had been away, overseas, for three, four, and five years. The bombings had made their shabby homes shabbier; the war had made it impossible to brighten their drab lives. And these Americans, so eager to find someone to spend their incredible wealth on, could give the girls fun and luxuries their husbands had never been able to give them.

So there it was, an explosive situation, and one to which all the authorities closed their eyes. But one sad-eyed man saw the trouble ahead all too clearly. He was a Negro, too: the Rev. G. Daniels Ekarte, founder of the Liverpool African Churches' Mission. Humbly, but insistently, he repeated his warnings: "It's bound to happen: it's human nature." The U. S. authorities were finally persuaded to open Red Cross clubs for Negro troops, but that was "too little and too late."

The American troops eventually sailed away. And the Liverpool men began to trickle back. Many a man who loved his wife could forgive a passing infidelity under so abnormal circumstances; but what family could hope to achieve unity, outlive gossip, with one startlingly dark child in an all-white community?

Pastor Ekarte felt that the British government should assume the responsibility of caring for these children, but the bureau concerned—the Home Office—does not seem to share this view. Desperate husbands have been advised simply to divorce their wives. As Ekarte points out, this neither solves the problem of a couple who love each other nor provides for the wretched child.

As divorces and suicides increased, Ekarte determined that something must be done. With Leary Constantine, Britain's foremost colored cricket player, he formed a committee to provide shelter for the children. As word of it spread, frantic women and desperate men started wearing a trail to the mission door.

Ekarte tells of one man who came dragging his wife, her face swollen from blows and tears. "You're the last man I'll try," the husband half sobbed. "If you can't do anything, I'll kill her and the child and me."

Ekarte offered him the bargain he's offered other unhappy couples: "You take your wife and I'll take the child." He explains, "If you take away the child, you take away the husband's reminder to hate his wife."

At this writing Pastor Ekarte has six such waifs, ranging in age from three years to fifteen months, at the mission. The small, poor building cannot shelter more under the health authorities' ruling. The children have as a "playground" the rubble-strewn bomb site next the mission. When the crowd around them becomes too large, they are herded back inside by the two overworked matron-housekeepers. "You'd think people had never seen a child before," the two say bitterly. But these people haven't—not a colored child.

Other children have been placed in a home near Leeds, and Ekarte is financing the upkeep of still others "farmed out" in near-by towns.

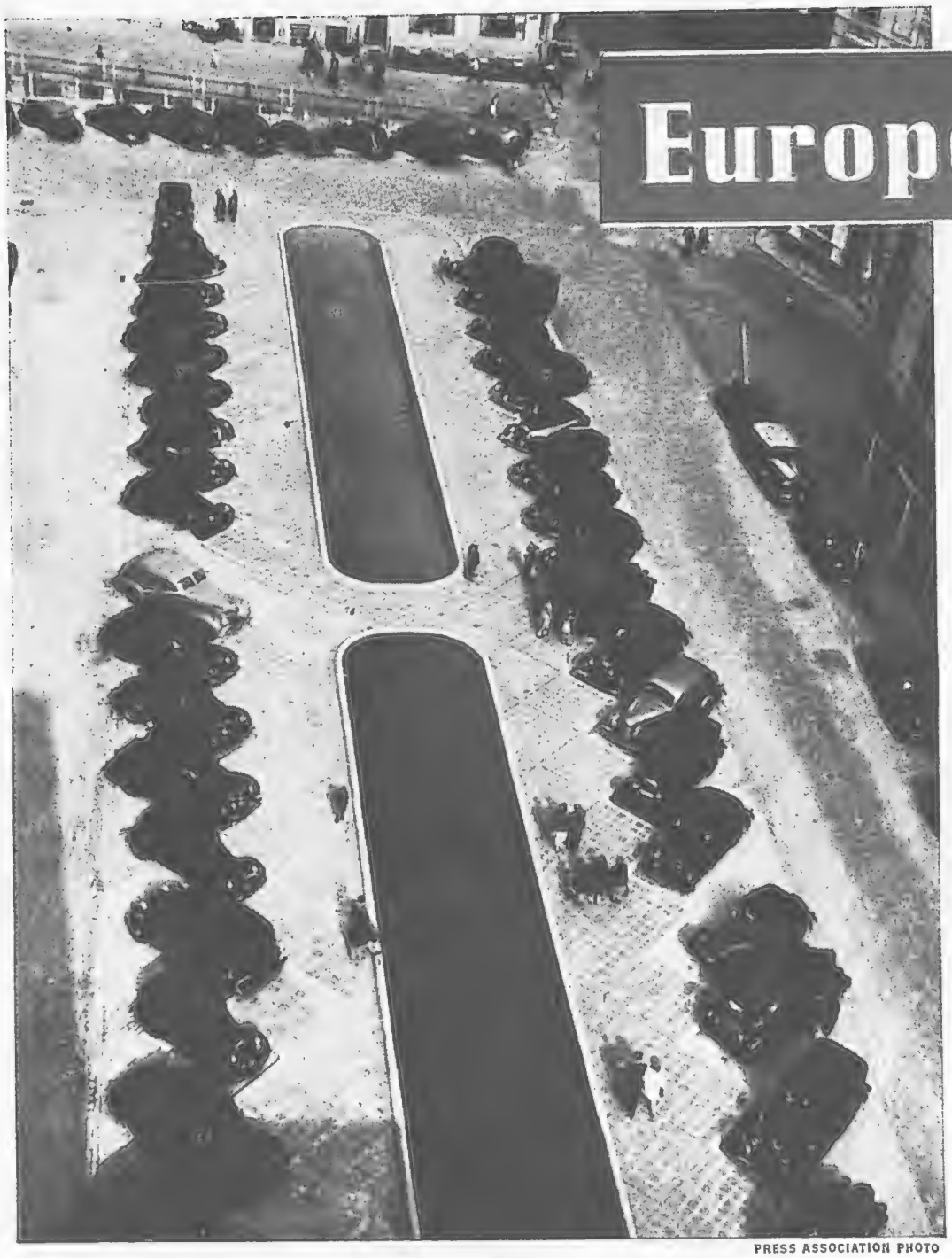
Ekarte's dream is a "Booker T. Washington Children's Home" to accommodate the estimated 600 children of colored fathers in Great Britain. He hopes to come to America to appeal for funds—first for the Home itself, then for education to give these wretched unwanteds a chance to earn their way in the world.

Surely if Americans could visit the mission and see, as I have seen, those little black children trying to play in the rubble—if you could see them in the dreary mission rooms devoid of toys, books, pictures, after their standard meal of bread and tea—you would feel a great shame and remorse.

For their parentage? That was "human nature," if not at its best. But the world's treatment of them is human nature at its worst—a cold-blooded indifference that is more nearly inhuman.

THE END

Europe Without



PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

Plenty of new autos jam this spacious car park on the Belgian coast.

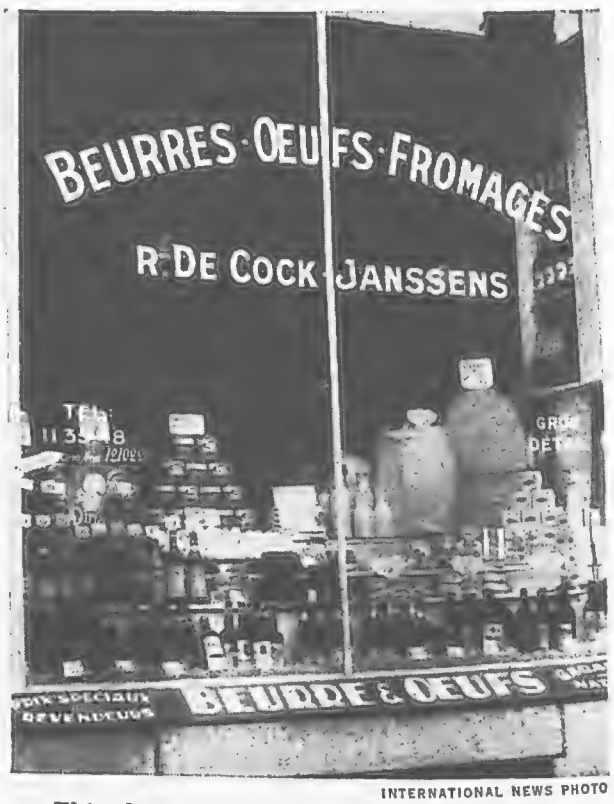
BELGIUM, earnestly experimenting with planned deflation, is widely supposed to be a leader and example in Europe's recovery. The popular impression is correct. As yet, however, only the hardy type of traveler should attempt to roam this small kingless kingdom for pleasure, though the reward in pleasure is immense for those who can cope with "troubles."

My own troubles, possibly less than average since I knew every corner of prewar Belgium, may serve as a syllabus of discouragement—or more likely a challenge. I first thought of flying from Paris, but one cannot even get to a counter at Air France in less than two hours. I was told that it would be a major miracle if I secured a reservation for a flight—anywhere—within two weeks. There is one excellent daily train, but one cannot board it without securing a reservation, and that also requires a miracle. The word has gone all over Europe that Belgium has *food,* lots of it and good, and everyone who can possibly manage even a week-end there, goes.

I took the night train, buying a first-class ticket so as to have room to spread out and sleep. About midnight four colossal Flemings, two men and two women, cheerfully preempted the four vacant places. They had third-class tickets, but stated, as if to end all discussion, that third

INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

These Antwerp housewives are the envy of Europe: they're buying roasts.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

This shop's specialties: butter, eggs, cheese.

Tears

Incredible Belgium, not two years after the Bulge, is a tourist's oasis of beauty and near-normalcy

BY SYDNEY A. CLARK

class was full to overflowing. They were the hearty type. They cracked jokes, prodding and slapping one another—and me. They sang and ate and drank. One of the men took off his shoes and put his feet across the aisle, very nearly in my lap. We reached Feignies, for the French outgoing customs halt, at 2.31.

We waited a two hour halt at this border village while a squad of customs and fiscal folk frisked all passengers for money. One cannot take out more than 1,000 French francs (eight dollars). But the 1,000-franc notes of France are as thin as tissue paper and this search is certainly the world's most useless performance. A woman frisker discovered, and announced, that one of the Flemish giantesses was *enceinte,* and the jokes over this filled the compartment until 3.45.

At Quévy, five miles farther along, we halted for the Belgian customs and money search, remaining a mere ninety minutes; but every passenger —there were about 500—had to take out every piece of luggage to a wretched little customs shed. The madness of the maelstrom there was beyond anything the mind can grasp. Somebody in the jam-pack smashed a bottle of wine over one of my open suitcases.

I lived through it. At eight o'clock I was walking down Brussels' Avenue Fonsny, smelling fresh croissants, which are collectors' items in France. I smelled coffee too. I saw and presently ate butter, with my breakfast—and what a breakfast! It was out of this European world! After it I went to Cook's to cash my American Express travelers' checks, and found that Cook is not allowed to exchange them. The cashier said, "Any bank will do it." I hunted up the big Société Générale de Belgique, which I had used for such matters before the war.

"It will take you a good hour to get the exchange window," said their friendly guard. "Why not try another bank, monsieur—say, the Caisse Générale de Reports et De Dépôts? It is just around the corner." There I was told that Guichet Four would cash my checks. At this window too there was a queue, but I worked my way up in eighteen minutes. "I'm so sorry," said the teller. "We honor American Express checks, but you must go to Guichet Twenty on the second floor." I did so. It was untenanted, but I finally roused someone from a distant desk. He regarded my checks mournfully and said the Caisse Générale was unfortunately not authorized to honor them. I pressed the matter and he sought a higher clerk, who in turn sought an officer of the bank. Still the answer was no, though it should have been yes. I learned later that because of some trouble with frozen funds in wartime many Belgian banks are still skittish on the whole subject.

The officer, disturbed by my insistent and valid complaint, tried to make amends by escorting me personally to the office of the American Express Company. By the time we reached it, it was 12.10. "*Zut alors!* The bureau, it seems, is closed until two o'clock." His conscience was so bad that he offered to lend me lunch money, but I still had seventy-two francs and thought I could squeak by on that. I had noticed a fifty-four franc menu posted outside the celebrated Taverne Royale.

Certainly I should have known better than to go to one of Europe's really great temples of gastronomy with only seventy-two francs. A waiter brought me a menu which was as utterly unlike the one posted outside as any menu could conceivably be. My mouth watered for *Le Poulet Reine Grillé à l'Américaine,* priced at 360 francs, this being a 10-per-cent reduction, rigidly required by the Belgian government on *everything* sold, from its previous price. I regarded with wistful eye *Le Canard Sauvage fine champagne* at 450 (reduced from 500). A dollar fetches just forty-three Belgian francs. But without going into the question of whether or not I would have paid ten dollars for a Chicken

(*Continued on page 76*)

WIDE WORLD PHOTO

German mine field now a sidewalk café.

GUILLAMETTE PHOTO

A Brussels prefabricated house, now being made in quantity, costs a mere $4,300.

LETTER OF THE LAW

Liberty's SHORT SHORT STORY

The army ordered. The Germans obeyed blindly. And, oddly, that was the trouble

FRAU REINECKE was in Neukirchen the afternoon the town crier came through, ringing his bell, to read the new American proclamation sent down from Headquarters in Ober Ramstadt. People stood in little groups in the middle of the ancient town square and listened.

Frau Reinecke, her business finished, hitched the straps of her cart higher on her shoulders and trudged the deep-ridged dirt road leading home. When she finally came in sight of the familiar farmhouse and barn, she suddenly stopped. The memory of something long forgotten penetrated her consciousness. The sight of the barn, the slow recollection of the proclamation—the electrifying combination of the two.

"Um Gottes Willen," breathed Frau Reinecke aloud. *"Um Himmels Gottes Willen!"*

At home, Frau Reinecke puttered about the dim kitchen, stirring the soup on the stove, flitting to the window to look impatiently down the road for her man's coming. At last she saw him, a shadowy outline plodding beside his oxen in the twilight.

She waited until he had led the oxen into the barn, had hung his manure-scented great jacket on the peg outside the kitchen, had scrubbed his face and hands in the water pail and had finished his soup.

"The town crier was in Neukirchen today."

"So?"

"A new proclamation. Within four days all motor vehicles, without exception, must be brought to the American motor pool in Ober Ramstadt, by the order of the Military Government," she recited.

Heinz Reinecke shrugged. "So what? None of our business." He took down his pipe. "The devil with their proclamations. Here, give me a match, if we have any."

"What do you mean, none of our business? Have you forgotten the Opel? If they find it the Lord only knows what will become of us."

The big man looked up at her, his face blank.

And then he, too, remembered.

"Herr Gott!" he exclaimed. *"Du lieber Gott!* I'd forgotten all about it. Now what do we do?"

"We'll both have to go to Ober Ramstadt tomorrow and take them the Opel. That's all there is to it," the woman said. "You won't be able to go to the fields, but no matter."

The farmer's slow brain digested this new problem. Let's see. . . . It was fifteen kilometers to Ober Ramstadt and fifteen kilometers back. Fifteen and fifteen is thirty—that would mean an all-day trip. It would take at least an hour to get the Opel out of the barn. That would mean up at four thirty. . . ."

"The poor hens will miss their roost," the woman's voice broke in. "Well, they'll have to be moved."

"Ja, ja, of course," he replied slowly. "One cannot disregard the law for a flock of chickens."

THE Opel was a small sedan, vintage 1921. They had acquired it when Frau Reinecke's nephew had sold it to them, very cheap, in 1928. It had been out of commission; but Herr Reinecke had somehow got it to work. When it finally gave up the last breath of life, the Reineckes had pushed it into the barn.

With the passing years, the Opel had become a very part of the barn itself. Years of dust lay upon it, a sack of hardened cement had been discarded upon the front seat, old harness hung from its radiator, and on the back seat chickens roosted above the tattered stuffing in which the cat periodically had her kittens.

The old peasant and his wife set to work long before daylight getting the Opel out of the barn. A path had to be cleared, amid clouds of dust the accumulated paraphernalia was removed, the sleepy hens shooed out, and finally the two oxen were backed up and fastened to the bumper. Tugging and creaking, they succeeded in dragging the dilapidated relic out into the barnyard.

Frau Reinecke shook her head. "We can't budge out of the courtyard with that thing. It's filthy. I'll have to give it a cleaning."

Reinecke agreed. "Even the oxen would balk," he chided. "Come, get some rags and a pail of water."

It was far too late to start the long journey to Ober Ramstadt that day. And too late for the fields, too. A day wasted.

At five o'clock next morning Frau Reinecke heard her man cursing and the creaking of the oxen yoke outside. Tucking her woolen shawl about her shoulders, she went out, took her place wordlessly beside the head of the lead ox, grasped his halter and tugged him toward the open road. It had begun to rain.

Outside of Neukirchen the Opel sagged into a rut. The oxen stumbled and wheezed, groaning under Reinecke's whip. As they strained against the yoke, the harness snapped and the old ox collapsed to his knees. He struggled to his feet. The blood trickled slowly from a gash in his forelegs. Reinecke picked up the broken leather harness, took a knife from his pocket and started to bore a hole in each end.

"We are destroying the beasts," he said.

By noon the rain had stopped. They sat down by the roadside. Frau Reinecke sliced off some thick chunks of black bread and divided them, with some sausage, between herself and her man.

"We won't get back in the daylight today," he said.

"I know," she said. "I wonder what the *Amerikaner* want the car for anyway?" she suddenly queried.

"Who can pretend to understand these things?" asked the man. "There must be some reason, but we have no choice but to obey." He spat. "Has it not always been so?"

They rose. The oxen stirred wearily as she pulled their heads up by the halter, the man cracked his whip, and they leaned forward against the yoke. The iron rims of the Opel's wheels grated over the hard dirt and moved slowly ahead.

CAPTAIN GRAINGER stood at the window of his office at Military Headquarters. What a lousy break officers were getting on the whole re-deployment deal, he was thinking. Here everybody had gone home and been replaced—and only three of the old gang were still stuck in Ober Ramstadt.

The phone rang and Sergeant Morrison, relaxing at his desk across the room, answered. "It's for you, sir," he announced. The captain reached over for the receiver.

"Captain Grainger? Say, this is Major Cowles. I'm at the motor pool," a tense voice came through. "Listen. We're in one hell of a mess down here. And I mean mess: traffic jammed for blocks around, broken-down vehicles all over the place, the colonel blowing his top, and Krauts coming in from everywhere, dragging in the weirdest bunch of junk you've ever seen. There's only about a dozen cars fit to look at in the whole bunch, and we got over five hundred vehicles here already. . . ."

The captain breathed a long "Keeriste!"

"It's that damned proclamation," the major continued excitedly. "Didn't that thing emanate from your office?"

"Sure, but it was on orders from the colonel," shouted Captain Grainger. "I was just looking out the window a minute ago and saw a couple of Kraut peasants dragging

BY

JULIET BRIDGMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GODWIN

a wreck down the street with two oxen. I didn't get it at first."

"Well, the colonel's mad as a hornet. Traffic's all jammed up and he can't move. Now listen. He wants you to get another countermanding order right away—send it on to the burgomaster by five the latest. The order should read that with the exception of those otherwise notified, every one of these vehicles is to be hauled back within three days. And no roadside dumping. Each vehicle's got to go back where it came from. Have you got it?"

"Yes, sir. I'll get busy on it right away," said the captain.

"Better send it over to the colonel's office. Let him sign it."

"Roger." Captain Grainger motioned sharply to the sergeant.

"We've got to get out a countermanding order right away, sergeant, regarding requisitioned vehicles. The colonel wants all vehicles brought in in accord with the last order—look up the date on that—picked up and returned to original location, with the exception of those otherwise notified. And no dumping. Put in a special clause on that. Now get on the ball and get the order on my desk immediately. You've got the special forms, haven't you?"

"Yes, sir, I have. Right away, sir."

Captain Grainger returned to the window. In the street below Herr Reinecke, his Frau, his oxen, and the Opel had made slow but steady progress. Despair overwhelmed him momentarily. Would these people ever learn? Were they so far gone in subservience to authority as to be incapable forever of thinking for themselves? He sighed.

Sergeant Morrison in the next office barked an order. "Corporal Parr!" The corporal jerked to attention. "Take this down—it's a new order on civilian vehicles. The usual form opening, and then 'with the exception of those otherwise notified, all persons who have complied . . .'" He rattled the proclamation off quickly and expertly while the corporal took shorthand notes. "Get it out on the form sheet right away. The captain wants it sent over to the colonel's office before five."

"O.K.," said Corporal Parr. When the sergeant had left the room, the corporal sat down at his desk and extracted six pieces of form paper. Then he counted out five sheets of carbon paper. He slipped them adroitly between the white forms and twisted them into his typewriter.

"These damn Krauts," he muttered softly, "they give a guy nothing but trouble."

THE END

The iron rim of the Opel's wheels grated over the hard dirt and moved slowly ahead.

Play the Game BY RUTH McCOY HARRIS

THE first time I ever saw Alan Chidsey, many years ago, he was wriggling across the living-room floor on his belly. Suddenly he seized an imaginary gun and gave with the ack-ack. All in heavy silence.

When I saw him a month ago, he was doing exactly the same thing, was acting out "An army marches on its stomach" in a television program, Play the Game, on Station WABD of the American Broadcasting Company.

Play the Game is perhaps the only television program entirely conceived, worked up, and sold by amateurs, most of them living in the New York suburb of Plandome, Long Island. Owner of the show is Harvey Zorbaugh, head of New York University's sociology department and director of its clinic for gifted children. He is a man of considerable dignity, and some of his colleagues may be a little startled, not to say envious, when they turn the dial and see Professor Zorbaugh making with the mugging on the television screen.

The whole thing started as a parlor game, and is said to have originated at one of illustrator Neysa McMein's parties. It is strictly for intelligent people, and it also requires a bit of "ham" to be at its most side-splitting. Not everyone has the imagination or courage to act out "Low man on a totem pole" or "The hot seat," or "Lay on, Macduff," or "Ants in your pants," with the derisive and ribald remarks of the other guests as a goad.

Each of two teams makes up a list of mottoes, slogans, titles, quotations. One person is handed a slip and must act it for his own team to guess, while the other team, who knows what he is acting, howls insults. The team giving the most correct answers in the shortest time wins.

On television, besides Professor Zorbaugh and his wife Geraldine, there is a regular cast: Alan Chidsey, designer of fine books; Irene Wicker, Singing Lady of radio; Willard Mullin, cartoonist and illustrator; Victor Hammer of the Hammer Art Galleries; Charlotte Adams, writer and radio commentator, and Cedric Crowell, authors' agent.

Usually there is a guest or two. Some of those who have appeared are Hildegarde, Superman (Bud Collier), Jinx Falkenberg, Hazel Scott, and Richard Dyer Bennett.

The charade to be acted is chosen from those sent in by listeners. Usually it is visible on a sign behind the actor. When it isn't, or when Willard Mullin draws a cartoon to illustrate it, the television audience competes in guessing. A quick listener can phone his guess and see Mr. Zorbaugh answer the phone. If he is right—and first—he wins a prize.

THE END

Dignified Victor Hammer, proprietor of New York's lush art mart, the Hammer Galleries, simulates a man who has ants in his pants.

Charlotte Adams, newspaper columnist, cries convincingly into an imaginary stein of suds. The Game definitely is not for the shy.

Television's outstanding comedy show started as a parlor game

This variation of the Game gets a lot of laughs and calls for a certain amount of artistic skill. Willard Mullin, sports cartoonist, quickly sketches instead of acting out The Praying Colonels.

PHOTOS BY EMIL HERMAN

You can do one word at a time if you wish, thus prolonging the antics. In solving his problem, Alan Chidsey, a designer of fine books, gets down on his hands and knees and makes like a seal.

The Camera Eye

Few events on Earth and few people, great or merely odd, escape the camera's nimble probing

SUBMERGED—You'll have to take our word for it—there's a jeep in this picture. Its occupants are Willys-Overland engineers who invented the waterproof vehicle that will keep rolling under six feet of water for as long as forty-five minutes.
ACME

TOP OF THE MORNING—Sergeant Major K. Jackie of London, England, greets the sun on a rooftop with a musical headstand.
KEYSTONE

TROUBLE SHOOTER—General Eisenhower plays golf on the St. Andrews course in Scotland. His score: a military secret.
PRESS ASSOCIATION

PATIENCE—Two rare cranes from India wait for their first American-born to hatch in Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo.
INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

HERPETOLOGIST—Snake specialist to you. He's just captured one of seven cobras that broke loose on a freighter.
ACME

TERPSICHOREAN—Roz Greenwood, one of La Martinique's eye-fillers.
GLOBE PHOTO

Perpetual Emotion

Keenan Wynn is as much the acting fool as his famous dad is "The Perfect Fool"

By
SARA HAMILTON

IT is difficult to decide whether Keenan Wynn, the movie actor and son of Ed Wynn, is a likable lug playing a character or a character playing a likable lug. He has such an insatiable desire to act, that he can't get enough of it and resents actors who turn part-time farmers or ranchers or dairymen. For instance, the shooting of his last picture, Thrill of Brazil, had hardly ended when he sped away in one of his custom-built jaloppies to spend his vacation with the Laguna Beach Players directing Room Service, playing the role of Oscar Jaffee in the comedy Twentieth Century, and that of Duke Mantee in The Petrified Forest. To be sure, he didn't do all that in one night, but he worked seventeen hours a day during those weeks, lived on soft drinks and steak, and loved it.

With Keenan, even the relating of an anecdote takes on the importance of a Shubert production, with ash trays, lamps, visitors, and even the pup becoming props or aides to pieces of business. He acts out everything. His gift for mimicry lies in his ability to note and remember trivial little gestures, traits, and voice inflections in the everyday man that pass unnoticed by the layman.

Because his work is touched and embellished with genuine talent and coveted professionalism, he is looked upon as an authority by the personality boys and girls whose names rate bigger headlines.

At Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer they know he's good, even in the wrong spot; but how to pin-point that particular talent is the problem. Three fourths of the production staff seem unaware of his vast stage experience and the other fourth are enthusiastic—but powerless.

With the exception of playing Frank Morgan's father in The Return of Mr. Griggs, the studio endlessly and pathetically casts him as Van Johnson's pal, with Keenan endlessly and pathetically repeating, "But look, you can't do this to me!" As a result, Keenan acts off the screen as he should on, with pantomimic spontaneity.

He'll seize any opportunity for clowning. Some months ago he and Peter Lawford flew to New York. Two minutes after take-off, the plane had become a stage, the passengers an opening-night audience.

"Now, friends," Keenan would announce, from the aisle of the plane, "when Mr. Lawford" (business of introducing Peter for the hundredth time) "and I alight, be so kind as to form two rows through which we may pass. Applaud, please, and eagerly seek our autographs."

The passengers, of course, loved it.

His one and only interest outside acting is the construction of motors to power his foreign-built car. In blue jeans and old sweat-shirt he'll labor for days with mechanics in a garage.

After a plane he was piloting crashed for the third time and his rubber goggles, which melted into his face, had to be scraped off, he took to speedboat racing. Silver cups won in races crowd his shelves. Once he encircled Manhattan in thirty-nine minutes, setting some sort of record.

It was a motorcycle accident that did much to heal a breach that had grown between Ed, The Perfect Fool of vaudeville, and Keenan; a breach that had its roots in the boy's love for his mother from whom Ed had been separated for many years before her death. Ed flew out to be near his son who lingered near death for days. Now Ed goes about proudly saying, "I'm Keenan Wynn's father, you know."

Keenan was christened Francis Xavier Aloysius James Jeremiah Keenan Wynn, and spent his childhood on the broad acres of his parents' estate in Great Neck, Long Island, where he was born.

After he was graduated from Horace Mann High School in New York, he went to Ned Wayburn's prep school of the theater. His summers were spent with a stock company at Skowhegan, Maine. Later he became stage manager for George Abbott's Room Service. Then followed a role in One for the Show. It was one of his first Broadway successes and after the next hit—Two to Go—he was able to wallow in motors to his heart's content.

But he still gave his chief attention to acting.

It was while he was doing his first dramatic role in Blind Alley, that he was spotted for pictures. It also was during that period that he and actress Eve Abbott were married. They have two sons.

If there ever was any doubt that Keenan is sold on acting, his reaction to the story of an old actor found dead near a stage door ought to shatter it.

"He'd been in an actors' home and had been given an opportunity to act again," Keenan says. "There was a smile on his lips when we found him, and I thought, What a wonderful way to die—about to take a curtain call!"

THE END

Landlords Are People

...and you'll be interested to hear their beefs against tenants

BY JEAN VAN EVERA

CARTOONS BY MAX HORN

A tenant type to make landlords candidates for Alcoholics Anonymous: he rents an apartment for two and drags in a safari.

IT is probable that more tenants have hated more landlords in the last five years than throughout all the previous ages of history, and there is no doubt that some of the pictures painted of grasping, ruthless landlords are true.

But many renters will be pained to know that when landlords get together they fight for openings in the conversation to tell about the sins, depredations, malfeasances, misdemeanors, and general orneriness of tenants.

One mild-appearing apartment owner known to the writer gets a wild look in his eye as he tells what makes him maddest. It's the tenants' habit of subletting his property without consulting him. For instance, Gloria Gilch decides to go back to her dear old mother in Mattoon. She folds her tents silently and tells Irma, her best friend, that she can have the apartment. It is not so easy to hoodwink the landlord who lives on the premises, but the owner who is not there to keep an eye on things may not learn for months that Gloria has taken a powder. It still appears that the check for the rent which

Did you ever hear of wear and tear? Many a tenant acts as if he hadn't.

arrives through the mail, is coming from Gloria.

Irma may be a fine girl, but perhaps the building owner has promised his next vacant apartment to a friend. Laughable as it may seem, landlords do have friends.

Another tenant type to make landlords candidates for Alcoholics Anonymous is the citizen who rents an apartment for one person, or two, and before the week is out welcomes his in-laws and/or college chums, office colleagues, or war buddies and their families. At first glance the tenant cannot understand why it makes any difference to the property owner so long as he gets his rent on time. But—didn't you ever hear of wear and tear? Also, if an apartment designed for one person had a $30 ceiling, and a roommate has moved in—well, you can plainly see that paying only $15 a month for rent is enough to make a renter believe in Santa Claus again. Many landlords have been lenient about doubling up, but they can hardly be blamed for reflecting that a person earning a good salary and paying only $15 is practically his guest.

This splitting of rent is nothing new. It was practiced during the depression, and in previous "normal" times.

Pets are another headache to property owners. Even if Molly the collie is a blue-blooded thoroughbred, she leaves long hair all over the rugs and she brings in fleas. And fleas don't leave with the dog; they stay on and spread throughout a building as do other insects that dogs and cats bring in.

As for children, landlords declare, "It's the parents themselves who have put the hex on the kids. If they controlled their children and taught them respect for property, we'd all feel differently." It is not the ring of childish voices which disturbs the landlords, but destructiveness and cussedness.

Apartment owners who have been in the renting business for some time arrive at various conclusions concerning tenants. Many of them will tell you that the ideal tenant is an employed white-collar single woman past the age of twenty-seven or thereabouts. She pays her rent promptly, is not overdemanding on services, and usually lives quietly. The old-time Victorian suspicion of the morals of the woman who lives alone has little foundation in fact, according to landlords.

Two or more girls living together? Not on your life, say some owners. "Girls get married," explained one man, "and three weeks after you've rented to a couple of gals you liked the looks of, there will be a new one in there. Then the trouble starts. The girl who *didn't* get married hurried to get in another roommate right away so she wouldn't be stuck with all the rent. Then she finds she doesn't get along with Susie nearly as well as she did with Gracie. They

Two girls living together? Not on your life, say some owners who ought to know.

bicker, and one of them leaves. Then it's the same thing all over again. The turnover is too fast when two women live together—at least, that's the way it's worked out with my place."

The institution of marriage has a firm friend in apartment house owners who find that couples joined in wedlock make good, reliable, dependable tenants. But, unmarried girls, for all your peccadilloes, you aren't as bad as bachelors. Bachelors get behind in their rent. Also they are wolves and bring girls to their quarters. Mainly, though, landlords object to bachelors because single men, they say, apparently do not mind living amid dirt and disorder.

But in spite of all the carping there are many more tenants and landlords who like and respect each other than otherwise. In fact, believe it or not, some are firm lifetime friends.

THE END

They started the Federal Reserve in an old tomato can which they buried near a stump in the woods lot.

All Velvet

ED AMES laid his dusty old black felt on the child-size desk, decided it looked too out of place, and held it in his hand. Ed himself felt out of place, being thirty-odd and just naturally too big for district schoolrooms.

Outside the open windows, children's voices rang through the October afternoon, joyous after being released for the day.

"Miss Plunkett," Ed began, fixing his eyes just beyond the point where sunlight poured gold across the teacher's pretty head. "It's Marge I came to talk to you about. You've been teaching her to play the piano so nice. But that old organ of ours ain't much good any more. It wheezes." Ed's big work-calloused fingers turned the hat fervently. "I been studying a piano for Marge. But Eulalie's so dead set against going in debt. I ain't got the spot cash." Ed looked straight into Miss Plunkett's interested blue eyes. "Miss Plunkett, your word goes a long way at our house. You think you might help me talk Eulalie into jarring loose with some of that cash I lost last fall and she's got buried God knows where?"

Miss Plunkett shifted everything on the top of her desk around before she answered, kind of slow, "I couldn't do that, Ed, I'm afraid. Eulalie calls that money her velvet."

"Velvet!" Ed's jaw dropped.

"All velvet." Miss Plunkett rolled the words on her tongue as if she loved them. "Eulalie thinks knowing that money is buried where you can't get at it to spend it, has given you new ambition."

"Oh, for Chri—" Ed gulped. "Excuse me, Miss Plunkett."

"Eulalie so wants to believe in you, Ed."

"Does she?" Ed grinned. "Looks to me like she's trying to hold my nose that much closer to the grindstone." Ed squared his shoulders. "Tell me one thing, Miss Plunkett: Has our little girl Marge got music sense?"

"Yes indeed!" Enthusiasm lighted Miss Plunkett's eyes. "For a child of nine, Marge is exceptional. She has talent."

"That settles it! Marge is going to have a piano." Ed jammed the old hat on his head and glared at the schoolhouse stove. "Miss Plunkett, how is this school fixed for heating wood?"

"They contracted for coal, Ed. But the strike's held things up." Miss Plunkett wrote something on a slip of paper.

"If you want to make a bid for wood, here's the man to see."

"Gee, thanks, Miss Plunkett!" Ed read the name, then slipped the paper into his billfold.

"Ed, I've been thinking. If Eulalie has her First National, as she calls this buried sock of hers, why couldn't you start yourself a Federal Reserve? That's the name of another bank," she answered his blank look.

Ed shook his head. "Miss Plunkett, one money burier in the family is enough."

"Well, for a long time I've been saving to buy a baby grand," Miss Plunkett confided. "By Christmas it looks as if I'll have enough to buy one. I could trade my old piano in, of course. But if Marge wants it—It has a good tone."

Ed brightened. "Marge says your piano is a good one. How much you want for it?"

"I'd have to have it appraised first. Probably two hundred. But we'll let the appraiser fix the price."

"Cash?"

"Well—" Miss Plunkett laughed, embarrassed.

"Sure," Ed said. "You'd want cash."

"I live with my married sister, Ed. They burn wood. I might be able to find other orders among the neighbors."

"Gee, that would help, Miss Plunkett." Ed beamed. "Don't say nothing to Marge, Miss Plunkett. I want this piano to be a surprise—if she ain't an old woman when she gets it."

"It's our secret, Ed." Miss Plunkett wrinkled her nose, friendly. "I *might* drop a word to Eulalie?"

"Do, Miss Plunkett," Ed urged. "If Eulalie knows what I'm saving for, maybe she won't pester me for dough so much."

NO one had yet made a bid for the schoolhouse wood, so Ed and his son Jody got the contract. "It's our land, Jody," Ed pointed out. "I aimed to clear this woods lot this winter anyhow. If we didn't have to pay Hank Tippy rent on the buzz saw, everything would be clear profit."

"Wouldn't Hank sell his saw, dad?" Jody stacked wood carefully. He was twelve, with Eulalie's thin-

(*Continued on page 64*)

Even if money was the root of all evil, Ed Ames was set on making Eulalie dig for it

BY KERMIT SHELBY

ILLUSTRATED BY PERCY LEASON

"Oh!" Marge said. "Oh, *Oh!*" Her fingers caressed the piano—first the wood and then the ivory keys.

Ever since cave-man days the blue-green turquoise has been prized for its "supernatural powers"

Wonder Stone

BY RHODA LE COQ

A WELL-KNOWN New York career woman, steeped two university degrees deep in education, always wears a large sky-blue turquoise ring, no matter what the color of her ensemble. She claims it brings her luck. And the superstition is as old as the stone itself.

Although not listed as a "precious stone," turquoise has been more highly prized than gold from prehistoric times right into the here and now. Today's faint echo of "good luck" bounced first off a stone ax in cave-man days.

Why? Psychologists point out that blue and green are symbolic of earth, sea, and sky. The turquoise was therefore easily identified with primitive nature religions, as evidenced by archaeological discoveries in the tombs of Egypt, on the skeletons of ancient Pueblo priests, in Mohammedan tabernacles, and on the altars of Peruvian temples of the sun.

Our ancestors didn't know that turquoise faded or grew deeper in color from weather, heat, and the absorption of perspiration and body oils. So they explained the stone's changeability by a staggering mass of folklore, mythology, and odd superstitious beliefs.

Medieval Germans tested the fidelity of a lover with the gift of turquoise. If it faded—oh-oh! Oriental peoples believed the stone paled when the owner sickened, and lost color completely upon his death. Name your ailment, and some ancient authority in the Orient, Europe, or early America will have recommended turquoise, ground up, as cure or preventive.

We ran into a Western business man who illustrates the still heady appeal of turquoise perfectly. Ten years ago, Wiltz Harrison arrived in Santa Fé, New Mexico, to open a nice sensible business. One day he admired a friend's ring. "Made it myself," the friend boasted.

"The guy lied," Wiltz laughs, "but that started me designing jewelry." He became so skillful that he sold his former business. Now, as the head of Santa Fé Silversmiths, he employs a round two dozen Indian craftsmen.

Harrison offered to show us around the "Castilian" and "Tiffany" mines on Mount Chalchihuitl—an Indian word meaning "turquoise." We'd heard about this spot—the oldest mining operation in the U. S. A. Some 1200 years ago Indians furnished their own extensive turquoise needs from Mount Chalchihuitl, and also established trade reaching from Ontario to ancient Mayan villages.

The fabulous pit is in the peak of a volcanic mountain, hollowed to a depth of perhaps 130 feet, 200 feet wide. We marveled, as do modern mining engineers, at the acres of rock removed by primitive implements of the Stone Age. Then, in the lower-down areas where sharp rock angles revealed modern blasting, Wiltz began picking away like mad at a tiny seam of pale green.

Turquoise, a hydrous phosphate of aluminum and copper, gathers in seams of the volcanic rock. This rock forms the "matrix"—the darker brown, yellow, or reddish-colored pattern in many stones.

The modern Navaho and Pueblo Indians mine little of the stone themselves. Instead, they buy—or trade finished jewelry and other handicraft for the stone, either rough or polished.

They prize it highly for self-adornment, for use in religious ceremonies, and as a walking bank account.

Turquoise is now "big business" in the costume-jewelry market. The modern appeal of turquoise doesn't affect women only. Big strapping Western men also fall for it—and hard. They wear turquoise rings, watchbands inset with the stone—even bracelets. Dealers estimate that in the Southwest area alone between $500,000 and $1,000,000 worth of turquoise is sold yearly—a large figure when one considers the relatively inexpensive cost of the stone. After cutting, it sells by the carat: ten cents for low grade to a dollar for premium turquoise. One single stone is reported to have sold for $6,000; and rumor has it a single blast brought out $20,000 worth of turquoise from the Tiffany mine at Chalchihuitl.

For the benefit of the unwary, we collected a few items in the "warning" column for turquoise buyers:

Don't be rough with it. Turquoise scratches easily, and a hard blow will crack it. The color you buy is, of course, a matter of personal preference. If your preference is for a decidedly blue stone, however, you should know that if it is porous (as the cheaper ones generally are), its color will change to green unless you keep it from contact with soap and water. Also, if you've found a "terrific bargain," *smell* the stone: it may have been soaked in tallow to deepen a too-pale color, and will fade out with time.

The high demand for rare deep-blue turquoise has led to counterfeiting by staining green stones with Prussian blue. To detect this, wash the stone in alcohol, wipe and lay in a solution of ammonia.

THE END

The Case of the BACKWARD MULE

Terry Clane, answering Cynthia Renton's appeal to help her free Terry's rival from a murder charge, found himself suspect, Cynthia a fugitive, and a fortune at stake. The master of mystery fiction has written a tense thriller that takes the reader through the colorful mazes of San Francisco's Chinatown.

By ERLE STANLEY GARDNER

ILLUSTRATED BY BOB COLLINS

A LIBERTY BOOK CONDENSATION • *READING TIME: ONE EVENING*

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As the big steamer eased her way through the Golden Gate, Terry Clane, returning from the Orient, fought back an impulse of exultation. Here in San Francisco there was work to be done—dangerous work, and he was eager to get at it, eager to see once more his native land.

Standing at the rail, the wind ruffling his dark wavy hair, he watched the changing scenery of the shore line until the vessel glided smoothly in to the dock. The sun had now set and a new moon hung over the city, delicately arched, slender, and promising, the moon which the Chinese call "The Moon of the Maiden's Eyebrow."

Terry Clane thought of Sou Ha, the Chinese daughter of Chu Kee; thought also of Cynthia Renton. Cynthia would doubtless be there at the dock to meet him, and following that meeting . . .

The gang planks were run aboard and for the next thirty minutes Clane was busy. Finally, his baggage having been inspected by customs, he moved toward the fence-like structure which separated the incoming passengers from those who had come to greet them and saw his trusted confidential man, Yat T'oy, sitting calmly on a bench waiting. Clane caught Yat T'oy's eye. His smile brought no answering gleam of recognition. Yat T'oy turned away. Perplexed, Clane looked around for Cynthia Renton. She was nowhere in sight. Catching the eye of a newsboy, he flipped him a quarter and took one of the late papers which he folded under his arm. He started toward Yat T'oy, knowing that the wooden-faced indifference masked some warning which the ancient Chinese servant dared not give.

And now Clane was conscious of eyes that were resting upon him with more than casual interest. A man by the door, another by the baggage truck, a third at the gate.

He walked past the bench where Yat T'oy was seated, taking care not even to look at the old man. Yat T'oy took a cigarette from his pocket, fumbled awkwardly for a match. "*Gie heem,*" he said as though merely muttering at the failure of the match to light the cigarette.

Clane walked casually on and stood by the gate waiting for his luggage to be brought out. He thought of the newspaper under his arm, unfolded it and snapped it open. The action might have been a signal. The three men converged on him at once.

"You're Clane?" one said. "Terry Clane?"

"Right."

The man took his right arm, another took his left. "Someone wants to ask you some questions."

"What about?"

"We wouldn't know," the man said and firmly removed the newspaper from Clane's hands.

The third man was behind now and they were moving steadily forward. Clane held back, but the pressure from behind increased and he was rushed into a big black sedan, a motor throbbed to life and a siren wailed for the right of way.

TERRY CLANE lit a cigarette, settled back comfortably in the chair. Across the desk, Police Captain Jordon adjusted a combination desk lamp and ash tray so that it was midway between them. Terry, noticing the peculiar grilled sides of the light stand, realized that there was a microphone concealed within the metallic base.

"Mr. Clane," the police captain said, "I realize how anxious you are to be free to see the city, so I'll be frank—and abrupt. You've just returned from the Orient?"

"Yes. Your men were waiting for me when the boat docked."

"I take it you know why."

"Frankly, I do not."

"You have been in the Orient for some time?"

"Yes."

"War work?"

"Yes."

"An old hand in the Orient?"

"I had lived in China, studied there."

"Before you left for the Orient this last time you were either engaged to Cynthia Renton, a portrait painter, or were very well acquainted with her. You had also known her sister, Alma Renton, for some years. After you left, rumor has it that Cynthia was pretty much broken up for a while, then she took up with a chap named Edward Harold. Did you ever meet him?"

"No."

"You know about him?"

"Yes. In a way. I was not engaged to Cynthia Renton when I left. I had been, but I suggested that she had better be free when I had to leave. My mission was highly dangerous, the chances against my ever returning."

"What do you know about Harold's trouble?"

"I knew that he had been arrested for the murder of Horace Farnsworth, tried, convicted, sentenced to death, and had appealed. The trial took place just as I was leaving China."

"How did you know of the verdict, the sentence and the appeal?"

"By wireless."

"From Cynthia?"

"Yes. She hoped I'd get back from the Orient in time to be of some help. I don't think Harold was guilty."

"You knew Horace Farnsworth?"

"Yes. He had some money of Cynthia's which he was investing for her. He was, also, a partner in the Eastern Art Import and Trading Company. I knew the others:

Stacey Nevis, Ricardo Taonon and George Gloster."

"Where were you last night?"

Clane showed surprise. "On the boat, some two hundred odd miles offshore."

"You didn't leave that boat by plane or otherwise?"

"Heavens no. I couldn't possibly have done so. Why do you ask?"

"Because last night Edward Harold was being taken by automobile from the county jail to San Quentin prison. His appeal was, of course, pending, but it is customary for criminals convicted of felonies to be taken to the penitentiary to await the disposition of their appeals. At approximately ten-thirty the car had a blowout. Later on police found that heavy roofing tacks had been sprinkled all over the road. Two masked men stepped from the bushes, heavily armed. They handcuffed the officers with their own handcuffs and took Harold away. Do you know anything about this affair?"

"This is the first I have heard of it."

"No idea where Mr. Harold might now be hiding?"

"None whatever."

Captain Jordon pushed back his chair, said casually, "The Supreme Court will dismiss an appeal taken by a person who becomes a fugitive. Would you have any objection to repeating your statements to a polygraph operator, Mr. Clane?"

"None whatever," Clane said.

The room to which he was led was dominated by the machine, but the chair in which he was placed was com-

fortable. The various electrodes and gadgets were adjusted. The machine looked perfectly innocuous, something which might have been a radio waiting to be turned on. There was only one man in the room. He introduced himself as Harry Maynard.

"Of course, Mr. Clane," he said, "with a man of your intelligence we don't try to pull any hocus-pocus. Naturally if you had anything to conceal, knowing that you weren't obligated to take this test, you would have refused it. You know what information the police are after."

Clane nodded. He realized that his own mental processes were to be used to trap Cynthia Renton. He had read somewhere that moving a foot at just the right time would register a slight rise of blood pressure. It wouldn't do to have the blood pressure rise on one of the danger questions. It must be done on one of the minor questions so that the record would be false.

After a few casual questions Maynard asked, "Do you have any idea where Miss Renton might be now?"

Clane said, "No."

But even as he spoke, he felt certain that the machine had betrayed his emotion. He would move his feet on the next question.

"Could you tell us approximately how long Cynthia Renton has been acquainted with Edward Harold?"

"I think about two years."

"Oh, Mr. Clane," Maynard said, "you moved your foot slightly. I forgot to caution you about that. You see, we have a device on the machine now which registers voluntary muscular motions, but that doesn't prevent the needle from giving a slight rise in its reading."

"I see," Clane said smiling. Swiftly he thought back to the time when he had been captured by bandits who had been about to chop off a finger to send with a ransom demand.

Maynard's voice went on smoothly. "Do you know any of the circumstances in connection with the murder of Horace Farnsworth?"

Abruptly Clane threw a mental image of these bandits into his consciousness. "No," he said. "I was, of course in China at the time he was murdered."

Maynard started to ask another question, then checked himself, frowning in perplexity. Clane knew then that his mental gymnastics had sent the needle upward into the zone which marked sudden emotional tension.

MAYNARD abruptly switched to other things. "You had a pleasant trip across?" he asked.

To register great relief now that the subject of the questioning had left the murder, Clane brought to his mind, as he answered "Yes," the feeling of triumphant peace he had known when the war ended.

"Did you see Horace Farnsworth shortly before he was killed?"

"No," Clane said shortly and then added, "I don't like to have my word doubted. I told you I was in China at that time."

Maynard explained suavely. "Many times I have to make what might amount to false accusations in order to evaluate the readings of the machine." Abruptly he produced a map of the city and held it in front of Clane's eyes. "If you wanted to find Cynthia Renton, or if perhaps you thought that Edward Harold was hiding in the city, where would you look for him?" In turn, Maynard's finger indicated the four quarters of the map.

Clane chose the exclusive residential district for the place where he would register the sudden upswing of the needle on the machine, and then permitted himself to relax. He had now diverted attention to a part of the city where he felt sure Cynthia would not be at this time.

Abruptly Maynard opened a drawer and pulled out a small wooden figure. "Does *this* mean anything to you?"

To save his life Clane couldn't overcome the emotional impact that the figure aroused in his mind.

"I see that it does," Maynard said dryly. "It seems to be a figure of a very aged Chinese on a horse, seated backward."

"It isn't a horse," Clane told him. "It's a mule."

"Can you tell me something about the figure?"

"He's Chow Kok Koh, one of the eight Chinese immortals. He is supposed to have supernatural powers of magic. He can make himself invisible at will."

"Perhaps you can assist us by telling us the reason for the emotion you are now registering."

"I think," Clane said, "the figure which you are holding in your hand is one I gave to Cynthia Renton just before I left for China."

"It had some particular significance?"

"It doesn't have anything to do with the murder," Clane said. "It goes into some Chinese philosophy. Something rather sacred. It is knowledge which is closely guarded and given only to the person whose mind has been prepared to receive it."

"You think perhaps it would be too deep for my intelligence?" Maynard asked, with a patronizing smile.

"I am not certain that your mind is ready to receive the information."

Maynard put the figure away, detached the machine from Clane's arms and regarded him thoughtfully.

"I don't understand it," he said. "Either there is something in connection with your thought processes which I haven't accurately diagnosed, or else you surreptitiously returned to this country and murdered Horace Farnsworth. That's all, Mr. Clane."

IN the office of STACEY NEVIS, *Investments,* two men facing each other were seated close together. The one facing the door jumped up, smiling, his hand outstretched as Terry Clane entered. "Well, well, at last," he said. "We'd about given you up."

"I was detained," Clane said, shaking hands with Nevis, a tall loose-jointed man in the late thirties. George Gloster, the other man, some seven or eight years older than Nevis, stocky, intense, nervous in his motions, rose and pushed out his hand, but his smile was perfunctory. The dark glittering eyes seemed to be taking a cautious inventory. He said, "I'm afraid I haven't much time left."

As they all sat down Clane said, "It won't take long for me to say what I have to say. Where is Ricardo Taonon?"

"He had other plans for the evening," Nevis said.

Clane said, "Well, we can get along without him. As I understand it, Farnsworth was trustee for Cynthia Renton. He was her investment manager and I believe he had about ten thousand dollars of her money. I am wondering if some of it didn't go into the Eastern Art Import and Trading Company."

"He put ten thousand dollars into this company all right," Nevis said. "He always insisted that was his own. Cynthia Renton's money went into an oil deal that didn't pan out. But he offered to take that off her hands. Shortly before his death he told us all about it and asked us to let him have ten thousand bucks out of the partnership and charge it to his account. Ricardo told him he could have it."

"He had some gold-mining stuff up around Baguio in the Philippines," Clane pursued.

"We sent him over there," Gloster told him. "Ricardo engineered that whole deal. He wanted to keep it under cover and it was given out at the time that it was Farnsworth who was making the mining investments. It was all partnership. Farnsworth's signature's on the agreement, all signed before a notary."

"Horace left twenty thousand in insurance," Nevis said, "payable to his estate."

"Leave a will?" Clane asked.

"No will. No near relatives. There's a half sister in the East somewhere. I guess she'll take the estate."

"Who's handling it?"

"The Public Administrator."

"Did Horace leave any detailed account of the trust investment?"

"Yes. He left a statement of trusteeship and a statement, signed before a notary, that his investments with the trust funds were in this oil business, and that he felt he was partially to blame the stock wasn't worth more. Therefore he said that if anything happened to him he was giving the beneficiary the option either to take over that investment or to take the cash."

"Rather strange a man would make a statement like that unless he anticipated he wouldn't live long. He didn't have any premonition, did he?"

"Not that we know about, Clane. He was peculiar, given to morose periods of silence."

Clane said, "Well, I'm here. I'm going to look into a lot of things. I wanted you to know. You can either cooperate or not. It'll make a difference whether you want to . . . in the way I play things."

"We want to," Nevis said. But Gloster blurted, "I don't see just where it's any of your business. I'll be in favor of giving you what information you're entitled to, but I'm not going to open any partnership books to you. And you can bet Ricardo won't either. The killing wasn't over money. It was just plain damn jealousy. Ed Harold thought he was a sort of guardian for Cynthia Renton, and he resented Horace having anything to do with her. And Horace suspected Ed Harold was taking an interest in Cynthia Renton's money rather than in Cynthia herself. And that's your murder, right there in a nutshell. If you'll take my advice, don't go messing around in something that's none of your business. Edward Harold did that, and where is he now?"

"I guess that's what the police want to know," Clane said.

"That's right. He escaped last night," Nevis said. "It was a fool move. They'll nab him and any chance of a commutation of sentence is out the window now. He isn't a bad sort, but he's hotheaded and he's bullheaded."

"I've got things to do. I'm going home," Gloster said. He put on his hat and called back over his shoulder, "Good night," and went out.

Nevis made an awkward attempt to be friendly. "George never liked Harold," he said, "and he's dour and crabby. But honest as the day is long."

Clane nodded, said after a moment, "I'd like to talk with Ricardo."

"He'd have been here if he could," Nevis assured him. "I guess he knew what you wanted. Guess we all did. If I can help you any, let me know. If Cynthia Renton can show any of her dough went into this partnership, she's welcome to it as far as *I'm* concerned."

"What is Farnsworth's share worth?" Clane asked.

"You could guess it as around a hundred thousand bucks."

"Thank you," Clane said, shaking hands. "If Horace signed those statements, I guess that's all there is to it. Cynthia wants cash to pay Harold's lawyers and to finance his appeal. I wanted to get the low-down here."

CLANE found Alma Renton, Cynthia's sister, in her studio apartment.

"Oh, how I've been waiting for you, Terry!" she said after the first greetings. "I didn't dare to meet the boat. Detectives were there. The most terrible things have been happening . . ."

"I know," Clane said. "Who engineered Harold's escape?"

She lowered her voice to a whisper. "Cynthia and a friend of Ed Harold's, a man named Bill Hendrum. It was a crazy thing to do and I'm just sick over Cynthia. They'll catch her, of course, eventually—and when they do, they'll throw the book at her. The officers told me that. They said I could tell her in case she communicated with me. She told me she'd kill herself the day they executed Harold, a sort of protest to society. Oh, Terry, why *couldn't* you have gotten here sooner!"

"I did the best I could. I tried for a plane, but they red-taped me to a steamer. You've heard from Cynthia?"

"Not a word. I'm afraid she and Ed have gone away to hide as long as they can and then shoot it out with the officers They're shadowing every move I make. They'll be following you, too, I guess."

"Well, the best thing we can do is pretend to carry on our regular routine. How about dinner? I've been thinking of a good thick steak with baked potatoes and lots of butter ever since we left Hong Kong."

When they were seated in the restaurant, he said in a low voice, "Tell me what you can about the case."

She said, "You know Horace Farnsworth, Terry. He was like an uncle to Cynthia. He was worried about the way she tossed money around. She gave him five thousand to invest and then later on another five thousand. Horace wanted to run it up to a million dollars and surprise her."

"Go ahead. What happened?"

"Well, after you left for China and told Cynthia you wanted her to be free, the poor child was completely heartbroken for a while and then Edward Harold came along. He was as scatterbrained as Cynthia in some ways, and conservative in others. He appealed to her."

Terry kept his eyes on the table cloth. "Were they engaged?"

"Don't be silly," Alma said. "Cynthia was waiting. But she liked Edward and they went places together and he became utterly infatuated with *her*."

"And became jealous of Horace Farnsworth?"

"Yes. He kept wanting Cynthia to get her money back from Horace, or to have him make a detailed accounting. And Cynthia laughed at him. But he did a little investigating. You remember that I wrote that Horace had gone into partnership with Stacey Nevis, Ricardo Taonon, and George Gloster."

The waiter deposited two dry martinis and a bowl of green olives. As they clicked the tips of their glasses together and sipped the drink Terry said, "Has it ever occurred to you that Cynthia might have gone to those Chinese friends of mine?"

"Yes, I've thought of that."

AT an unmarked door in a dim upper hallway of San Francisco's Chinatown, Terry Clane pressed the concealed bell button twice and waited. There was a faint sound as somewhere a sliding panel moved. A heavy bar was slid back by some electrically propelled mechanism; then the door swung smoothly inward.

An old Chinese servant stood on the threshold. His eyes danced with pleasure. He bowed deferentially, stood to one side. "Will you deign to honor this dwelling?"

Clane entered, dropped a hand affectionately upon the old man's shoulder, greeted him in Chinese. He led the way down a corridor carpeted with an Oriental rug as soft and springy as moss. Overhead lights scintillated through rock crystal prisms. The Chinese servant opened a door and stood back. Sou Ha started towards Terry with the calm, self-contained dignity of the Oriental, then ran with a squeal of delight to fling herself into his arms.

"Terry!" She tilted her head back, her eyes closed. He bent to the half-parted lips.

"My father," she said laughingly, "would be shocked. But why did he send me to a California college if he didn't want me to learn the ways of your country?"

"Why indeed?" Clane asked, smiling.

Her features held the classic lines of Chinese aristocracy that went back for some three thousand years. But superimposed was something distinctly Western, a certain jaunty independence.

"Where's your father?" Clane asked. "And how is he?"

"He's fine. He hoped you'd come tonight."

"I'd have been here sooner," Clane said, "if it hadn't been for the police."

"Over the escape of Edward Harold?"

"Yes."

She turned and led the way.

Chu Kee arose from a straight-backed chair and hurried forward. The placid calm of his countenance was broken by a smile. He paused to clasp his hands in front of his breast, shaking hands with himself in Chinese style. Then he too forsook the impassivity of the Orient to envelope Clane's hand with long sensitive fingers. "My son," he said in Chinese, "it has been long."

"It has been long, my Teacher, but absence has made the reunion all the more pleasant."

"You have accomplished that which you set out to do?" Chu Kee asked blandly.

"I am hopeful that my trip was a success."

There was silence while they sipped tea which the servant brought. Then Chu Kee said, "Your friend, the Painter Woman, where is she?"

Clane looked at him with startled surprise. "In a jam like this, I thought Cynthia would come to you."

"I too thought she would come to me," Chu Kee said.

"As one who is close to you, she also is close to me. You have not heard from her?"

"There has been no message."

"There will be one," Chu Kee said in a tone of quiet assurance. "She knows what boat you were on?"

"Yes."

Chu Kee picked up his cup of tea. "There is gossip," he said at length. "About the Eastern Art Import and Trading Company. Evidently there has been much loss and much profit. These men play at politics in the Orient. They are becoming powerful because one of them is shrewd—Ricardo Taonon, the Eurasian. His mouth says that he is a great friend of China. The significance of those words is not yet known. But I have men investigating."

After that silence enveloped them in an aura of friendship from which each drew strength and pleasure. When Clane finished his cup of tea Sou Ha made a motion to refill it, but Clane bowed and smiled. "It is enough, Sou Ha. I have work to do."

Sou Ha showed him out, her soft hand resting on his arm. "You will be careful, First-Born?" she asked. "My father thinks you are in danger. You have no idea where the Painter Woman is?"

"No."

"Then she is with this man who has escaped," Sou Ha said. "She has decided to live with him so long as he lives and to die with him when he is . . . I am so sorry, my friend. Have I hurt you?"

"No."

"You still love her?"

"I gave her her freedom when duty called on me to return to the paths of danger."

"And did she desire this freedom?"

"I explained to her the reason for it."

"Oh, you *explained.*" Sou Ha laughed musically. "In my country," she said, "you have studied under wise men, First-Born. And by meditation you have ripened knowledge into wisdom. But these wise men know nothing of women. Therefore, they can teach nothing of women." She pressed the button that shot back steel bolts on the inside of the door.

"And how does one go about acquiring this knowledge of women?" Terry Clane asked.

Her eyes laughed up at him. "You may kiss me again."

When the door behind him had swung noiselessly shut the kiss of the Chinese girl tingled against his lips. And Terry Clane, sure of himself when he had been within the fastness of a monastery high in the seclusion of snow-capped mountains, suddenly felt the tranquillity of his mind vanish as he descended the narrow flight of stairs.

YAT T'OY, Terry's man of all work who had been sent on to San Francisco two months in advance with instructions to secure, furnish, and provision an apartment, was still in the waiting room at the pier, sitting just as he had been when Terry left. He expressed no surprise as Terry approached. He rose, "I have baggage all together. You wish go to home now?"

Yat T'oy had secured a desirable apartment and furnished it well. Clane settled down in a chair and found a humidor with his favorite mixture of tobacco and a pipe rack at his hand. Yat T'oy brought him brandy in a snifter glass.

Clane spun the golden liquid about as he said, "Edward Harold escaped from the police officer. Cynthia Renton disappeared the same night. She has not been in touch even with her sister. She will try to get in touch with me. Do we have a telephone, Yat T'oy?"

"Have telephone."

"Be careful in case anyone should call. It is possible the police will listen in on the wire."

"Janitor who is alle same my cousin very smart," Yat T'oy said. "Police no listen in."

Clane smiled. "Do you have the newspapers?"

"Today's already here. Have kept also newspapers about escape from policemen of Edward Harold. Also newspapers about murder."

Clane settled down to reading. Edward Harold on the day of the murder had called on Horace Farnsworth at Farnsworth's request. He had found the latter very uneasy, perhaps frightened. Apparently he had planned to confide in Harold but had changed his mind.

The visit had concededly taken place about five o'clock in the afternoon and lasted until around five-twenty. The prosecution contended that about six o'clock Harold had returned. He swore that he had not done so; but a neighbor had seen him emerge from the front door of Farnsworth's house, jump into a car and drive away. Another person who had known Harold for years had seen him at a minute or two past six driving within a block of Farnsworth's house. Confronted with these statements, Harold had refused to answer further questions. The jury had reached a verdict of first-degree murder.

The body of Farnsworth, discovered at six-twenty-five by Sam Kenyon, Farnsworth's houseman, had been examined by a police surgeon who swore that the time of death was between five and five-thirty. Sam had spent the afternoon with friends, and had returned only in time to get supper.

The gun with which the murder had been committed had never been found. Harold owned a .38 caliber revolver. The murder had been committed with a .38 caliber revolver. When called upon to produce his, Harold had been unable to find it. He had had no occasion to look for it or to use it for a year, he said, and during that time he had experienced the usual turnover in help.

As Clane laid the papers aside Yat T'oy shuffled into the room saying, "Man who say name Gloster must talk on telephone. I tell him maybe so you not home I go find out."

"I'm home," Clane said, and went to the phone.

Gloster's voice seemed tense with emotion. "Clane," he said, "I know it's late, but there are reasons why I can't go to your apartment. Could you come to the warehouse of the Eastern Art Import and Trading Company? There's something here I want to show you, and then I want to make a statement to you. It's damned important."

"I'll be there as soon as I can," Clane said and took down the address.

On the street he turned up his collar against the chill fog which was swirling in, and started briskly toward the hotel where he felt certain he would find a taxicab. A dark coupé parked across the street started without the lights being switched on. It came abreast of him, then slammed to a stop. A door swung open and a rough voice commanded, "Get in."

There was only one person in the car, a huddled, shapeless figure behind the steering wheel.

"Come on," the voice said gruffly. "Get in."

There was something wrong with that voice, something . . . suddenly Clane had it. It was the voice of a woman. He turned abruptly, walked to the curb.

"Oh, Owl." The voice almost sobbed with anxiety. "Please. I didn't want to shout who I was."

"Cynthia!" he exclaimed under his breath and jumped

in beside her, pulling the door shut. "What in the world are you doing here?"

She instantly slammed home the gear shift. "Waiting for you," she said. "I thought you would never come out."

"Why didn't you send a message? Or telephone?"

"I was afraid of the police. I was waiting at the boat and I saw them pounce on you. I ran away."

"How did you find my flat?"

"Through Yat T'oy, of course. I'd been there several times, helping him arrange things. And then . . . Look, Owl, I can't drive and talk. I'm going to swing around on a side street and park."

"I'm on my way to meet someone, Cynthia. It may be rather important."

"You haven't anything in your whole life that's half as important as this, Terry." She was making time through the deserted streets.

"Don't be picked up for speeding," Clane cautioned.

She swung the car into a parking place near the curb, switched off the ignition and headlights and squirmed out from behind the steering wheel. Clane put his arms around her, felt the oft-remembered warmth of her body, the fragrance of her hair. Her lips, warm and eager, were hot on his, and her arms strained him to her.

"Terry," she breathed after a moment, and as she turned her cheek he felt the moisture of her tears. "I thought you'd *never* get here."

"Cynthia, what ever possessed you to arrange Harold's escape?"

"Let's talk about things in order, Owl."

"Where do we begin?"

She said firmly, "We begin with when you went away and were so damn noble that you wouldn't marry me before you went."

"I couldn't have taken you with me, Cynthia, and the chances were twenty to one that I'd never come back. I wanted you to be free and it turned out that I was right. You became interested in Edward Harold." He turned to meet her eyes. "And now you've done something typically Cynthia, the impulsive thing. Who were your accomplices, Cynthia?"

She said angrily, "Is that all you have to ask?"

"What else could there be?" he asked in surprise.

"Nothing," she said sharply.

"CYNTHIA," he said. "I want to know where Ed Harold is. He has to give himself up."

"And be executed!" she snapped. "He'd rather shoot it out with the cops, and I don't blame him."

"There's yourself to be considered," he said gently.

"And I don't count either," she said. "The trouble is with you, you're so damn right. When you went to the Orient I was happy-go-lucky and impulsive, and everything in life seemed a joke. And you told me that I couldn't live it that way, that life was serious, that it would get me down in the long run. Damn it, you're right! But I hate being logical and cautious and conventional."

"Life doesn't care particularly whether you hate it or not," Clane said. "Life exerts a steady pressure. You learn that causes build effects, which in turn become causes until you have a wheel."

"Why not just laugh at life and throw out your chips? Life isn't anything that can be hoarded. It's something you're spending even when you're trying to save it. You . . . you might just as well go along with it."

"But," Clane pointed out, "you were trying to tell me that I had been right and that life had got you down."

"On account of . . . on account of you, Terry Clane. When you went away, my life was . . . All right, we won't talk about it. You want to talk about the murder case."

"The point is," Clane explained patiently, "the Supreme Court will review the case and consider that it was a case of purely circumstantial evidence. They're apt to set aside Harold's conviction and give him a new trial. But he can't carry an appeal to the Supreme Court while he is a fugitive from justice. The district attorney is planning to go into court tomorrow morning and move for a dismissal of the appeal. Edward Harold should walk into jail and give himself up, and I want to help with the appeal. I want to try and unearth some new evidence."

"I tell you, Owl, he'll never give himself up. He loves life. He loves liberty. And imagine a man like that in a scrape like this."

"You love him very, very much?" Clane asked.

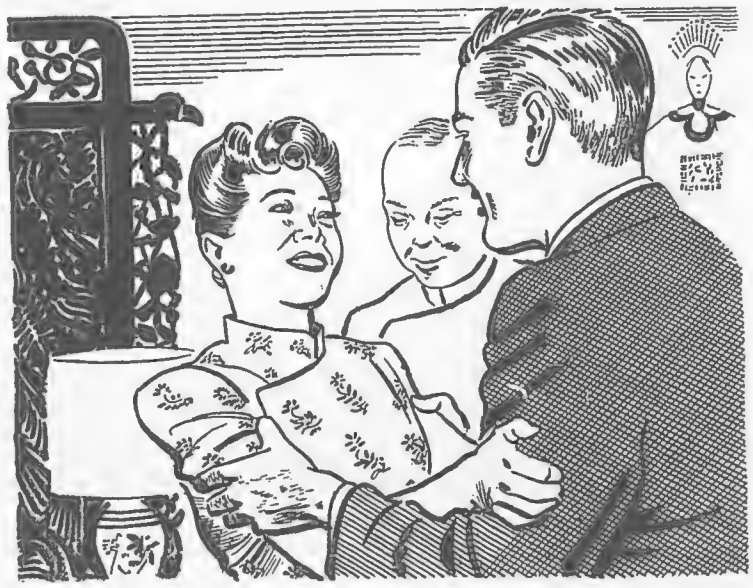
She abruptly snapped on the ignition. "Where's your appointment? I'll take you there."

She was easing the car into motion as Clane gave her the address. Abruptly she stepped on the brake pedal.

"George Gloster is going to meet you at the warehouse of the Eastern Art Import and Trading Company?"

"Yes."

She released the brake, slammed the car into gear. She flung words at him over her shoulder, her eyes watching the fog-shrouded street intersection as the car



shot by. "Edward Harold has been concealed in the Eastern Art Import and Trading Company's warehouse."

THE entrance of the building was shrouded in darkness, but the beam of Clane's tiny flashlight showed that the door was ajar. He called through the crack, "This is Terry Clane, Gloster. You there?"

There was no answer. Cynthia, heedless of Terry's warning, pushed open the door, clicked on the lights and disclosed the interior of the warehouse.

Behind a room which could be used as an office was the warehouse proper. While Cynthia walked towards the rear Terry examined the office. In the southeast corner was a wall telephone. On the south side, out a few feet from the wall, was a table. Three or four chairs stood about. In the northeast corner was an army cot on which were several army blankets, one folded over as a pillow. On the floor were cans of soup, fruit juice, beans, meat, vegetables, milk, and a big glass jar of coffee. On the table was a portable electric plate, a small aluminum frying pan, some knives and forks, a can opener, a cup and saucer, and a coffee pot.

Just to the east of the table lay the body of a man, face down. From it a pool of thick blood seeped slowly in an ever-widening circle. The tall dirty windows were all closed with the exception of a window in the southwest corner, which was wide open.

"Cynthia," Clane called over his shoulder, "this way, quick. Don't touch anything." He turned as he felt her peering over his shoulder. "You stand right there. Above all, don't touch any object."

But he himself rested his hand on the back of a chair as he moved around to where he could look down on the body.

"It's George Gloster," he called out.

Cynthia said, "Oh!" and that was all.

Clane bent over the table now. On a corner of it was a small ash tray fairly well filled with cigarette ends and burned matches. A magazine lay open face down. A chair had been pushed back from the table. Impressed upon the desk blotter were the prints of four fingers, marked in the sort of dust which would accumulate over

the years in a city warehouse. The print of the index finger was broader than the others, that of the little finger little more than a dot.

Clane turned, saying, "Okay, Cynthia, this is where you get out." He took her elbow, piloted her out toward the door that led from the warehouse on the north. "Did you touch anything after you came in?"

"I don't think . . . yes, the doorknob on the inside."

He took his handkerchief, carefully wiped the inner surface of the doorknob, held it open and escorted her to her car. He held the car door open, helped her in, then slammed the door shut. "On your way," he said.

"Look, Owl, let me tell you . . ."

He turned and deliberately walked away. After a moment he heard the whir of the starting mechanism, the pulsing of the motor, and her car slipped smoothly away into the fog-filled night.

Clane walked over to examine a car which was parked in the side street. It was a two-tone club coupé. The fog moisture had collected in beads on the windshield and on the hood. Two little rivulets of water had trickled to the ground in vertical lines. Clane noted the license number. He dared not open the door to look at the registration certificate.

He gave Cynthia Renton a full five minutes. Then he walked back into the warehouse. Near the telephone he noticed a fresh sliver where the wood had been marred. A bullet, apparently of .38 caliber, had struck the wall and slightly embedded itself.

Clane picked up the telephone receiver and said, "Police Headquarters, please . . . Homicide Department. I want to report a murder."

INSPECTOR Jim Malloy of Homicide arrived, greeted Terry, asked him the expected preliminary questions, and finally remarked, "There's a window open over there. It was open like that when you came?"

"Yes."

Malloy turned back to one of the men on Homicide. "Sammy, run around and take a look under that window. Be careful now—you might find a footprint or perhaps the mark of a jimmy on the sill. Now, Clane, there's the body. Gloster, you say. You went over and took a look?"

"I went over and took a look."

"You shouldn't have done that. You should have identified him after we got here."

"I had to use the telephone," Clane said.

"That's right. See anything over there?"

"I did notice where a bullet had embedded itself in the boards."

"You didn't touch it?"

"No."

"No fingerprints of yours on the bullet, then. Now if you'll just step outside, Mr. Clane, and let our men get busy here, we'll perhaps find out a lot more things. Did Gloster live here?"

"I don't know, I shouldn't think so."

"I wouldn't think so either. Perhaps a night watchman has been sleeping here. But there's been a lot of cooking, hasn't there, and not much opportunity to get out to dispose of garbage. Now *that's* interesting . . . Well, I guess we won't bother you any more right now, Mr. Clane. If you'll just step right out and wait there in the police car, you'll find one of the boys there to talk to you. I know you won't mind waiting to tell us your story. Let's see now, you felt it was pretty deserted down here and a person would have a hard time getting to a telephone. That's why you decided to call us from here."

"That's right."

"Well, if this neighborhood is so isolated, how did *you* happen to get down here?"

"In a taxicab."

"You should have kept it waiting. You might have had some difficulty getting another one."

"I thought Mr. Gloster would take me home."

"Oh, you knew Mr. Gloster was here?"

"Naturally."

"Well, Mr. Clane, if you'll just go out and sit in the car now . . . and, by the way, I guess you'd better give the boy your fingerprints out there."

AT the end of twenty minutes Inspector Malloy came barging out of the building, his genial bluff good nature a mask for his busy brain.

"Now if you wouldn't mind stepping right in here, Mr. Clane, and . . . But before you do that, perhaps you'd better show us just what happened. You came here in a taxi. Now where did you get that taxi?"

"It was cruising along the street."

"Lucky, that's what you are," Malloy said. "Pop out of your apartment and bang, there's a taxicab right there. Here's some tracks. So the taxi stopped about here and let you off. Then you reached down in your pocket and took out some money. How much was the amount of the bill?"

Clane's mind raced to avoid the trap. "I don't know, Inspector. I gave the man a bill and told him to keep the change."

"Dollar bill? Two-dollar bill? Five-dollar bill?"

"A two-dollar bill."

"Well, now, that's a break for us, Mr. Clane. A two-dollar bill. You've given us an excellent means of finding that cab driver. He'll substantiate your story. Now why did you come here?"

"Mr. Gloster telephoned me to meet him here."

"So you got off here and found that this man Gloster wasn't here and paid off the cab. You're a brave man, Mr. Clane. But then I suppose you've been in lots of tough places . . . What was the first thing you said when you saw the body, Mr. Clane?"

"Why, I didn't say anything." As Malloy looked at him in surprise, Clane added, "To whom would I have spoken?"

Inspector Malloy slapped his thigh. "Of *course*. You were alone. I'd overlooked that for a minute. By the way, did you notice this cot and the canned goods? You must have if you were prowling around enough to notice a bullet."

"I wasn't prowling around," Clane said.

"But you did notice the bullet. That's rather a small object."

"It had plowed up a fresh sliver there in the woodwork right by the telephone."

"That's right, that's right," Malloy said apologetically. "But let's get back to this cot and the canned goods and the cooking utensils. What impression did that make on you, Mr. Clane?"

"I assumed that someone had been living here."

"Now did you have any idea who?"

"No."

"Well now, you know it's a very peculiar thing, Mr. Clane, but there's Edward Harold, who murdered one of the members of this here Chinese art company, and he's just as apt as not to have taken some keys from the body. Keys, let us say, which would fit the warehouse. Interesting too, the way you get around. You arrive here from China and the first thing you know you're all mixed up in this murder case. Well, you want to get home and I'll just ask you a few more routine questions. There wasn't a woman in that taxicab with you?"

"Absolutely not."

Malloy suddenly turned to one of the men and said, "Let me have that bag." The man handed him a woman's black handbag. He went on. "That seems to have been brought here by a woman. The driving license in there is in the name of Cynthia Renton and there's twenty-five hundred dollars in twenty-dollar bills. Now you know this Cynthia Renton?"

"Yes."

"You were pretty much wrapped up in her when you were here last, weren't you?"

"Yes."

"And you're quite certain she wasn't here visiting this Edward Harold and she was the one who telephoned you, not George Gloster?"

"I've told you it was Gloster."

"I know you have, Mr. Clane, and you'll pardon me for asking. You know Gloster?"

"Yes."

"When was the last time you saw him before the murder?"

"Earlier this evening. I had an appointment with Mr.

Gloster, Stacey Nevis, and a man by the name of Ricardo Taonon. Taonon didn't show up. I met the other two. I had a business matter to discuss with them."

"Where?"

"At the office of Stacey Nevis."

"For about how long?"

"Oh, ten or fifteen mintues."

"And then the next rattle out of the box Mr. Gloster telephoned you at your home. What time would you say?"

"Oh, about eleven—perhaps ten minutes past."

"And you came right down here?"

"Not right away," Clane said, sensing the trap. "I dressed. I was in a dressing gown and pajamas."

"You told him you'd be down perhaps right away?"

"I may have given him that impression," Clane said, aware that the police might have had his line tapped and knew all about that conversation.

Inspector Malloy abruptly pushed out his hand, grabbed Clane's in a bone-crushing grip. "Thank you ever so much, Mr. Clane. You've been a real help, you really have. Freddy, will you take Mr. Clane home? Drive him right to his apartment. Drive just about the way you would if you were a taxi driver, and make a note of just how far it is and just how long it takes you to drive it. Good night, Mr. Clane—that is, good morning, and thank you very, very much."

TERRY CLANE, trying the bathroom door the next morning, found it locked. A feminine voice called out cheerfully, "Just a moment."

The bolt turned and Cynthia Renton, wearing a pair of his pajamas and carrying a toothbrush in her hand, smiled cheerfully at him, said, "Good morning," and walked casually past him.

"How long have *you* been here?" Clane called.

"Why, ever since last night. I came here when you were waiting for the police at the warehouse."

She was bubbling with good humor at breakfast. "I didn't dare to go back to the warehouse for my purse," she explained. "I knew that you'd called the police. I had only a five-dollar bill in the top of my stocking for mad money. Everything else was in the purse."

"Including a big wad of money?" Clane asked.

"Oh sure. I thought I might be sort of on the dodge for a while. So I took a cab and came here to borrow money from you. Before you came home, a whole flock of plain-clothes men came driving up and scattered all around the neighborhood so they could keep a watch on this flat. Yat T'oy reported to me and I felt certain they'd make some excuse to search, so I went out to the back service porch and hid in the broom closet. Sure enough, a man came up with the janitor to inspect a leak in the gas pipes. They prowled all around and then left. Yat T'oy came and got me—and here I am."

"Well," Clane said, sighing, "I guess you've made a criminal of me all right. Now I want to know exactly how Edward Harold escaped and who rigged it up for him; what your part in it was, how you happened to hide him down there in that warehouse."

"But, Owl, I didn't. The first thing I knew of his escape was when I heard it over the radio. I didn't want the police to find him. And I thought they would start looking for me, thinking I might be mixed up in it; and I thought that, if I could be sort of a decoy and start running off, then whatever time it took the police to catch me would be that much time gained."

Clane merely nodded, didn't even glance at her.

"So," she said, "I spent the night with a girl friend. I drew some money out of the bank as soon as it opened. I decided to go out and wander around the country. I didn't see Edward, I didn't know where he was."

"Then how did you know he . . . ?"

She was silent for a moment. Then, as though having reached a decision, she spoke swiftly. "You know, Owl, I have been doing a little commercial painting lately. It was pot-boiling, mail-order stuff, and I didn't want to do it under my name. So I took the name of Vera Windsor. I needed an address for it, so I got a post-office box."

"Edward Harold knew it and got in touch with you that way?"

"Yes. Yesterday afternoon there was a postcard giving me the address of the warehouse of the Eastern Art Import and Trading Company."

"You didn't leave the card in your purse, did you?"

"No. I put it right back in the box. I thought that at any moment some detective might step out and tap me on the shoulder. I knew you were coming in and I wanted to ask you what to do. So I went down to the boat and I saw them nab you. I came back and waited around."

"Why didn't you tell me right away?"

"I had to sort of sound you out first to . . . Owl, I can't throw myself wide open, even to you, without any preliminaries."

"But you intended to tell me?"

"Yes. I wanted to suggest that you go down there and see Edward with me."

"You don't think he'd have liked that, do you? You knew he was in love with you and would want to see you alone."

"I suppose so."

"If you didn't arrange for Harold's escape, then who did?"

"It must have been Bill Hendrum. I can't think of anyone else. He's as reckless as they come."

"Have you had any communication with him?"

"No."

Clane said, "I think we should talk with Hendrum. If you'll give me his address, I'll get in touch with him. Meantime, you stay here without even going near a window, absolutely out of sight."

He walked over to the telephone, dialed a Chinatown exchange and spoke to the operator in Chinese and to Sou Ha, when he got her. When he returned to the breakfast table Cynthia was watching him with speculative eyes.

"I always get suspicious of you when you go into that Chinese stuff, Owl," she said. "Was that Sou Ha?"

"Yes."

"What did you ask her to do?"

"I asked her for her help and her father's."

"I suppose you know, Terry, that she loves you?"

"Sou Ha loves me? Nonsense!"

Abruptly Cynthia asked, "Owl, tell me again just what is the meaning of that figure riding the mule backwards, that you gave me before you left for China."

"Chow Kok Koh, the little carved figure, believes that the various vicissitudes of life are but the tools with which the divine architect shapes one's character," Clane said. "He believes mortals are placed here on earth to develop character. Whether a man has good fortune or bad is relatively unimportant. It is only his reaction to the good or the bad fortune that counts.

"A man who suffers adversity and reacts in the proper way to that adversity has developed his character in such a way that he has achieved a net asset, has benefited as though he had good fortune. A man should not be swollen with pride at triumph, nor despondent over defeat. Chow Kok Koh rides his mule backwards because he says it makes no difference where he is going. A destination in life is unimportant. It is only what one does along the way that counts. So ride your mule backwards. Pay no attention to the things that happen to you, pay attention only to your reaction to them."

"I know you told me this before," she admitted. "But I was sort of riding the crest of the wave and it didn't register. I remembered some of it. I tried to tell Edward Harold about it. He seemed terribly interested."

"Did you let him have the little wooden image?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"The afternoon Horace Farnsworth was murdered. He brought it back the next day."

"Where is it now?"

"In my apartment."

Clane shook his head and said, "The police have it, Cynthia, and there are some spots of blood on it."

WHEN the buzzer sounded Clane waved Yat T'oy aside and opened the door. Chu Kee stood on the threshold, his face bland and expressionless. He shook hands with Terry Clane, American fashion. A step behind him was

Sou Ha, in a fur coat with a high collar. She wore a bright blue hat with a jaunty red feather.

"How'm I doing, Terry?" she asked.

"That's fine," he told her.

Cynthia Renton dropped a little curtsy to Chu Kee, then went over to give Sou Ha her hand. Yat T'oy, his aged eyes sparkling with pride in his race, took their hats and coats, brought in pots of hot tea, little plates of dried melon seed and thin crisp wafers made from rice flour; saw that cigarettes and ashtrays were in place, and then discreetly withdrew.

Clane got down to business at once. "Cynthia is wanted by the police," he said.

"You want her out of here and the place is watched, isn't that it?" Sou Ha said.

Clane nodded.

Sou Ha said, "I thought that was it. This coat collar conceals most of the face, and the natural target for the police gaze would be the conspicuous hat.

"I'm to dress in her clothes and go out?" Cynthia asked. "And then what?"

Chu Kee said, as though the speech had been rehearsed, "Some day I shall join my ancestors. I desire that I

leave behind some likeness of myself. Would it, perhaps, be possible for you to live in my humble dwelling for a time and paint the portrait which I desire?"

Sou Ha said eagerly, "You could make a wonderful portrait, Cynthia."

Cynthia was not long in agreeing. Then Terry Clane clapped his hands. Yat T'oy appeared at once carrying hats and coats.

There were tears in Cynthia Renton's eyes. She took the Chinese girl in her arms, kissed her on the cheek. "You are wonderful, Sou Ha."

Sou Ha's face was expressionless. "Thank you."

"And now," Chu Kee said, "it is time to depart. Posing for a portrait is very tiresome. I am no longer young and I wish to have the freshness of morning upon me when my features are placed upon canvas." He bowed and shook hands. He turned to Cynthia Renton, "If you are now ready?"

She laughed nervously. "I am now ready."

Clane watched them down the corridor, then went back to Sou Ha.

"I didn't like to ask it," he said, "but there seemed to be no other way out."

"First-Born," she said, "my father is your friend. It is a privilege when he can do things for you."

"And you?"

Her eyes went to his face. "You know how I feel." Then her eyes moved away and she added softly, "Or *do* you? Tell me, First-Born," she said after a moment, "is it only when things concern the Painter Woman that you become so self-conscious about asking our aid? Is it because you feel that your friends are not our friends, particularly the friends who are closest to you?"

Clane faced the steady, inscrutable eyes. "What are you getting at, Sou Ha?"

"It would be embarrassing if she were to become your wife and thereafter felt that there was any reason why she should not avail herself of our friendship."

"She is not my wife."

"She may become your wife."

"Is not that crossing a bridge before one comes to it?" Clane said. "Sou Ha, a man has been convicted of murder and he has escaped. Those who aid him in that escape are guilty of a very serious crime."

"I know no man who has been convicted of murder," Sou Ha said with a wooden face. "I know only that I have lent my coat and hat to a friend and borrowed hers."

Clane said, "Sou Ha, will you wait here for a while? I have to go out."

"How long will you be gone?"

"Perhaps an hour. You will, of course, keep away from the windows."

"Am I a fool?" she asked. "Or have you grown accustomed to women who lack responsibility?"

TERRY CLANE emerged from the apartment house where he had been in conference with Bill Hendrum. His efforts to convince Hendrum that Edward Harold ought to be urged to give himself up had failed, but finally Hendrum had said, "I can tell you only one thing which may help. Ricardo Taonon was driving his automobile in the vicinity of that warehouse about thirty minutes before the time the police think the murder was committed."

"Could I say that you saw him?" Clane had asked.

"You could not." He had walked over to the door, held it open. "I've gone farther than I intended to. I thought you were something of a heel. I guess you're all right. But I still wish you'd stayed in China. Good-by."

Noticing a police car turn the corner and park, Clane walked rapidly down the steep sidewalk and ducked into a small neighborhood grocery. Walking directly back to the shelves in the rear, he looked over the merchandise as though trying to find something he wanted.

The door pushed open and Clane saw the familiar figure of Inspector Malloy. He moved up to the fruit-juice section. Inspector Malloy pushed a paper across the counter toward the proprietor.

"Within the last few days have you sold that list of groceries or part of it to some one?" he asked. Then suddenly he saw Clane. "Well, well, well," he boomed "And what are you doing here, Mr. Clane?"

"Oh, just picking up a couple of cans of fruit juice," Clane said.

"Well, I was just making a routine investigation. Get in my car and I'll deliver you and your fruit juice right to your own flat."

"I'd prefer to walk," Clane said. "I like the feeling of having dry land instead of the deck of a ship under me. I want to prowl around, looking in store windows where there is actually some merchandise and . . ."

"Yes, yes, I know. But I'd like to have a little talk with you."

So Clane climbed in beside the Inspector.

"Now then," Malloy said sternly, "I want to give you a word of warning. It's chaps like you, playing at cops and robbers, that make trouble."

"Just what do you mean?" Clane asked.

"You know what I mean, snooping around these stores and trying to find out where Edward Harold bought the provisions that were in that hideout. Leave all that stuff to the police."

Clane, willing to let Inspector Malloy accept that excuse for his being in the neighborhood, said meekly, "Yes, I suppose so."

Malloy said, "We sort of stole a march on you last night, Mr. Clane. We searched your flat. One of our men posed as a gas man."

"Find anything?" Clane asked.

"Not a thing, Mr. Clane. But on the other hand, it wasn't what you'd call a thorough search. I think, if you don't mind, we'll go look the place over again."

"And if I do mind?" Clane asked.

"In that case, I have a search warrant," Malloy said. He parked his car directly across the street from Clane's flat.

Clane took the longest possible time getting out of the car, praying that Yat T'oy would be watching from behind the curtains of the windows. He climbed the stairs slowly and took as long as he dared getting the door open. Malloy pushed past him into the apartment.

"Oh, Yat T'oy," Clane called and added in Chinese, "the police search . . ."

"None of that," Malloy interrupted him sharply. "We'll talk English if you please, Mr. Clane."

"My servant understands Chinese better."

"If you don't talk English, you're going to find yourself in something of a mess. My instructions are to arrest you and charge you with the murder of George Gloster in case your actions are suspicious."

"Charge *me* with the murder?" Clane said, raising his voice.

"Well, of course, I don't make the formal charge, but I'd arrest you on suspicion of murder."

Clane walked from the living room through the dining room to the kitchen, Malloy on his heels.

Yat T'oy was standing by the sink, wooden-faced, chopping onions with a large, sharp butcher knife. On

her hands and knees, Sou Ha was scrubbing the kitchen floor. Her hair was hanging down around her face. She was barefooted and her skirt was pulled down tightly between her legs and pinned in back. She didn't even glance up.

Clane, taking in the situation, said angrily to Yat T'oy, "I told you not to have this woman around any more. She didn't come the day she was supposed to. You're fired." He turned to Sou Ha. She looked up at him with blank countenance. "Yat T'oy, you get that woman out of here. You savvy?"

"Me savvy," Yat T'oy said and slammed the butcher knife down on the chopping board. Then turning toward Sou Ha he said angrily in Chinese, "Have no fear of the bedrooms, they have been carefully gone over."

Clane, with the manner of a man whose day had been subject to a series of exasperating annoyances, said to Malloy, "All right, let's go look in the bedrooms. Gosh, how I wish I were back in China!" Then he said in Chinese, "It is well that Sou Ha should leave at the moment Malloy leaves so that watcher will see them emerge from the door together."

Malloy looked through the bedrooms and then said, "Well, I'll run along. No hard feelings."

"No hard feelings," Clane said and escorted him to the door.

From the back entrance leading to the hallway, Sou Ha made a dispirited exit from the kitchen. She was carrying what appeared to be laundry tied up in a sheet. Bare feet were thrust into a pair of oversized Chinese slippers which belonged to Yat T'oy.

She started down the steep hill, walking stiff-backed, with shuffling steps.

Clane, watching from the window, saw Inspector Malloy gain Sou Ha's side in three or four swift steps. He was apparently offering her a lift. Sou Ha shook her head, moved on. Inspector Malloy insisted. Sou Ha turned and, with the air of one who is too tired to be grateful, climbed into the Inspector's automobile. Clane felt an uneasy disquiet as the car immediately gathered speed.

TERRY CLANE was walking along, putting himself into the place of Edward Harold, trying to anticipate Harold's next move. Some hundred yards behind him was the warehouse where the murder had been committed. Assuming that Harold had jumped from that window and raced across the strip of soft ground where his footprints had been found, he had hit the pavement and then had started walking. Where would he walk and what would he do?

Clane plodded along through the drab warehouse district until he came to a small restaurant with a sign over the door, *Open until* 11:00 *P.M.*

He seated himself at the counter. The waitress eyed the dollar bill be held out. "What's this for?"

"Information," he said. "I think a man came in here around closing time last night to telephone. He didn't have a hat or an overcoat. He was rather tall and had dark hair combed straight back, the eyes were dark and . . ."

"Sure, I remember him. He got some nickels and dialed a number. He didn't get any answer, came back and had a cup of coffee, then went over and dialed the same number again. I happened to notice . . . business was slack and—well, he seemed sort of all on edge."

"All right, what happened then?"

"He didn't get any answer either time. He came back and had another cup of coffee and then dialed another number. That time he got an answer. He talked for a minute or two and then came back and sat down. He seemed more quiet then. About ten minutes later a car drove up outside and the driver tapped the horn. The man paid me and almost ran out of the place."

"Could you see the driver of the car?" Clane asked.

"She was a young woman, but that's all I could see. The car was a convertible, a sporty job. I'm trying to think of what it was about the man when he came that made me watch him."

Clane watched her intently. "Something in the way he was breathing?"

"*That's* it," she said. "He was breathing as though he was excited about something. It was just about ten-thirty when he came in here, and he was out by quarter of eleven. I was sort of keeping an eye on the clock. I had a date."

Clane pushed the dollar bill across to her and a five with it. "Thanks a lot," he told her.

Outside the restaurant he paused, thinking: Edward Harold had left the warehouse in something of a panic. He had been running. And the time element indicated that he had, perhaps, a perfect alibi if he had only remained long enough in the company of this mysterious woman. It could hardly have been Cynthia. Could it have been her sister, Alma? No, she hadn't a car.

But he decided to telephone Alma. "I'm trying to borrow a car," he told her. "I want to drive past a building and take some movies of the lines of almost perpendicular perspective. You don't know anyone that has a convertible, do you?"

"Daphne Taonon. Ricardo Taonon's wife."

"You don't know her well enough to borrow it?"

"Heavens, no. Tell me about Cynthia, Terry. Have you heard anything . . . ?"

"I don't know where she is," Terry said, "and even if I did . . . well, you know, the walls have ears and telephone lines have feelers." He hung up.

Discreet inquiry of the night man at the garage of the apartment house where Ricardo Taonon lived, plus a ten-dollar bill, gave Clane additional information as well as a look at the convertible. It had come in at about eight-thirty in the morning. The man didn't know when it had been taken out. Its sides were still streaked with water that had dripped down from the windshield. The day man was about ready to wipe off the car.

Clane made note of the license number, and the garage man volunteered more information. The night switch-

board operator had told him long distance had been calling Mrs. Taonon at intervals all night. There had been no answer; apparently both Mr. and Mrs. Taonon had been out since midnight at least.

In a rented "drive-yourself" car, Terry Clane started out to explore. He took the peninsula road down to San José. The other roads involved crossing toll bridges, and plain-clothes officers unobtrusively stationed at the toll gates could have scrutinized closely the occupants of each automobile as toll was collected.

Painstakingly Clane covered all of the smaller auto courts until he had passed the last remote point of probability at which anyone would have stopped for the night. An auto court of the cheaper sort was ahead on the right and because it offered a good place to turn around, he drove up to it. His inquiries were made merely from force of habit. Had a convertible containing a man and a woman registered at about—say, one o'clock in the morning? Another ten-dollar bill paved the way.

"Well, yes," said the woman who ran the place. "We did rent a cabin. What's *your* interest in it?"

"I am trying to find the woman," Clane said. "I believe she drove away."

"Yes, she's working in town. Some sort of a saleswoman, I think. She was gone when I got up. The husband's still in bed. He's got the flu. Maybe if you wanted to go into town, you could spot the car, a nice convertible."

"I'll talk with the husband," Clane said. "He may know. What cabin's he in?"

"Just a minute. You a friend of theirs?"

"I've never seen either one of them in my life."

"You ain't a paid detective?"

At that moment a high-powered sedan of the type driven by county sheriffs was slowing down at the entrance of the driveway.

"Quick," Clane said. "Where's your register, what's the cabin?" He pointed toward the car's red spotlight. "Do you want your place advertised as a gangster hideout?"

She gave the car a quick look. "Number three," she said and he sprinted for the cabin.

"WHO is it?" a man's voice called.

Clane said gruffly, "This is your landlord. There's a long-distance call from San Francisco for you. A woman. She won't give her name."

There were quick steps, then the door began to open. Clane, lowering his shoulder, charged against the door. The occupant of the cabin spun back, off balance for a moment; but he quickly caught himself and Clane found he was looking into a round black hole at the business end of a .38 caliber revolver. The man circled, kicked the door shut.

"You're Edward Harold," Clane said. "I'm Terry Clane, you may have heard of me. Take a look out through that curtain and you'll find the sheriff's car blocking the road out. He's probably expecting Inspector Malloy of the San Francisco Homicide Squad."

"I see. You want me to look out the window so you can jump me," Harold said.

Clane said, "What I want you to do is to walk out and give yourself up. I have a theory on this thing. I think I can help you."

"I know. You'd like to have me out of the way. You walked out on Cynthia and now you'd like to have her back."

They argued until steps sounded on the porch, knuckles banged on the door. "Open up. We've got the place surrounded," said the voice of Inspector James Malloy of San Francisco.

As the door bent under the weight of a burly shoulder, Harold shouted, "Stay away from that door if you value your life! I'm going to start putting lead through it!"

There was a sound of motion outside the door, then sudden silence.

Clane said, "If you surrender, you stand a chance. Pull the trigger, and it's assault with a deadly weapon with intent to commit murder. It's resisting an officer."

Harold said grimly, his eyes still on the door, "Don't kid yourself. The first shot is going to be a dead-center shot right in the middle of your yellow guts."

A slight scraping sound from the porch caused him to jerk the gun half toward the door.

The glass of the window crashed explosively. The window shade billowed inward and a tear-gas bomb from which the plug had been pulled rolled free of the broken glass. With a hissing sound the gas spewed out into the room.

As Harold braced himself for a leap to grab the bomb and throw it back out through the window, Clane went forward in a football tackle. He felt his shoulders smash against Harold's body, heard the rattle of a sub-machine gun, then a voice yelling, "Hold everything!" He went blind, tears streaming down his face; but his hands got a wrestler's lock on Harold's arms. They threshed blindly about the floor until suddenly Harold's arms were jerked back. The struggling ceased and Inspector Jim Malloy's voice said, "Well, I'll be damned! It's Terry Clane!"

CLANE felt the bite of handcuffs on his wrists. He was guided to a chair out in the open air.

"You're something of a mystery to me," Malloy said. "Now here you are, back from China, sitting on top of the world, and you start right in mixing in with this thing, which is after all really none of your business. Now take that Chinese scrub woman you had. I thought I'd better take a look in her laundry package. I found a coat with a tailor's label in it saying it was made for Cynthia Renton."

"And what does the Chinese girl say?"

"Well, nothing much. Perhaps *you* can explain".

"I don't feel much like making explanations right now."

"Well, now, that's too bad. But suppose you tell us just how you knew Harold was at this place."

Clane told him how he had uncovered the trail. How much of it was news to Malloy, Clane had no means of knowing.

When he had finished, Malloy said, "Around eight-thirty this morning Mrs. Taonon rang up police headquarters. Her husband hadn't been home all night and she was afraid there might have been a traffic accident or something. She said he got a phone call around ten o'clock and rushed out telling her he'd be back in thirty minutes—but he never came back. And now it seems that *she's* disappeared, too.

"Now then," Malloy went on, "by ten o'clock this morning we knew where those groceries came from—something you wouldn't have been able to find out in a week."

"Where did they come from?" Clane asked.

"Well, now," Malloy said, "I don't know as there's any harm in telling you. They were purchased by Mrs. Ricardo Taonon. And now we're trying to find out about that call that sent Taonon rushing out last night. So we asked his partner in this Oriental company—Stacey Nevis. Nevis hadn't called Taonon, but he thought Gloster had. Nevis had a call himself from Gloster while playing cards—a sociable little poker game. Gloster said he'd gone down to the warehouse for something and found that someone was living in it and he wanted Nevis to come down there right away. He'd already called Ricardo Taonon and Taonon had given him the number of the place where the poker game was. The telephone was in an adjoining room, but the door was open and the boys started shouting at Nevis that if he left the game before midnight, it would mean a fifty-dollar fine. Well, Nevis explained to Gloster, and then Gloster said he'd tell Taonon to wait until he'd made a quick run up to Nevis and talked with him.

"Gloster drove up and honked his horn. Nevis went down and talked with him. Then Nevis went back to the game and Gloster to the warehouse. And that was about ten or fifteen minutes before Gloster telephoned to you."

"And who do you claim murdered him?"

"Either you and Cynthia Renton did it," Malloy said, "or Edward Harold. My associates pick Harold. Me, I'm not so sure."

"Down in that warehouse there were four fresh fingerprints on the desk blotter. Whose were they?"

"Gloster's."

Clane said, almost musingly, "As I remember it, the

prints of the first and second fingers were broad, that of the little finger hardly more than a dot, indicating that Gloster was standing there with his weight resting on his left hand which was turned so that most of the weight was on the first two fingers and on the thumb."

"That's right, only there was no thumb print. The prints were made from dust. The thumb simply didn't have any dust on it, therefore it left no print."

"And why was there dust on the fingers but none on the thumb?" Clane asked.

"Lord bless you, Mr. Clane, *I* wouldn't know! That's the sort of thing we leave to you bright amateurs. And now, Mr. Clane, if you're ready, I'm afraid I've got to arrest you as being an accessory after the fact."

TERRY CLANE and Edward Harold were put into a cell together.

"I suppose I did make a mistake," Harold said after a long silence. "I certainly got my defense all messed up. I lied to my lawyer and that's always bad. After all, it was really you that got me into it."

"I did?" Clane asked in surprise.

"Cynthia told me something about the philosophy of that figure on the mule you gave her. I kept thinking it over. It seemed something of a philosophy of life that was completely satisfying. You're probably the last man I will ever see who will understand what I'm trying to say . . . But I hate your guts. I thought I had Cynthia's love before I learned that her heart was yours. She thought she had taken it back from you, but she hadn't. She couldn't."

Clane said, "As to that, I'm quite sure that you're wrong."

"And I'm sure I'm right. You can believe it or not," Harold went on, "but I liked Farnsworth. He had a lot on the ball; a lot of thoughts that many people don't have. The day he was killed I went to see him. He tried to talk to me and couldn't. Something had him on the ropes. I asked him if he'd lost Cynthia's dough. He said, no, but he'd got himself in a jam where there was no way out. Hell, Clane, the guy was getting ready to commit suicide."

"So what did you do?" Clane asked.

"I told him to wait right there, that I was going to be back, and I went out to Cynthia's and got that figure of the man on the mule. I went back to talk to Horace Farnsworth about it. That philosophy has steadied me down in many a tight spot. I wanted him to see that figure. I thought it might help him to get a grip on himself. I went up to the front door and rang the bell. There was no answer. I got in the back door. I went on into the study. He was there—dead, with blood dripping from his head. I tried to straighten up the body.

"I looked around for the gun and . . . well, there wasn't any gun. And then I realized I was in a spot. I grabbed up the image and got out. People saw me leaving . . . there was blood on my trousers. There may have been a spatter on the image. . . . I returned it to Cynthia later."

"What happened down at the warehouse?" Clane asked.

"I was being given sanctuary there. I can't betray the person who helped me. I was assured no one would come there. Then suddenly I heard an automobile drive up, a key in the door, and someone coming in. The lights came on just as I was climbing out of the window. I looked back and saw Gloster standing there in the doorway. I think he saw and recognized me."

"What time was this?"

"A little after ten."

"And you went directly to that restaurant and telephoned?"

"Yes."

"To whom did you telephone?"

"That is something I'm not going to answer."

"Someone came and got you?"

"Yes."

"Who was it?"

"Try and find out."

A key turned in the cell lock. A burly, thick-necked man said, "Which one is Terry Clane?"

"I am," Clane said.

"Out," the man said.

"I knew they'd spring you," Harold said. "You haven't any hard luck."

Clane held out his hand. "Good luck," he said. "I'm probably merely being transferred. But here's luck."

In a waiting room near the entrance corridor of the jail were Chu Kee and Sou Ha and a tall impressive man with silver-gray hair. Chu Kee beamed at Clane, and the tall man caught Clane's hand in a muscular grip.

"I'm Carl Marcell," he said. "I've been retained to act for you! I've threatened a writ of habeas corpus, and they've turned you loose rather than put a charge against you. I sprang Sou Ha an hour ago," he added. "But they tried to hang on to you. If you have any more trouble call me. Here's a card. That number up in the right-hand corner is my private phone. I reserve it for my important clients."

"And your fees?" Clane asked, as they walked to the door.

Chu Kee said in Chinese, "What has been done is a matter of friendship."

Sou Ha explained, "Father retains Mr. Marcell by the year. For situations of just this sort."

Then Marcell was moving toward his car and Sou Ha, behind the wheel of Chu Kee's big limousine, was warming up the motor. Her penitent voice said, "I am clumsy, O First-Born. I failed to outwit this police person."

"That police person," Clane said as they glided off, "is plenty hard to outwit. Was it bad?"

"Not bad. Only they wouldn't let me telephone unless I talked in English. When the hours passed and I did not return, my father communicated with the lawyer."

Chu Kee sat with his hands folded in his lap, beaming out at the traffic, taking in the conversation.

"And what about Cynthia Renton?" Clane asked.

"The Painter Woman is safe. A messenger has told her sister she is all right."

Chu Kee said blandly, "A car follows us."

"Did you think I hadn't noticed?" Sou Ha asked, almost petulantly, and then apologized.

There were several moments of silence. "Are you going to try to ditch the following car?" Clane asked. Sou Ha was driving directly toward Chinatown. "We must not take them to Cynthia's place of concealment."

"We won't," Sou Ha told him, and then almost angrily said, "I know I have done everything wrong today, but at least give me credit for *some* sense."

Chu Kee shifted his eyes in silent rebuke to his daughter, and she said hastily, "We are going to see the wife of Ricardo Taonon."

THE shapely woman who stood in the middle of the room in the cheap Chinese hotel was barefooted. She was wearing a slip and apparently nothing else. Her blonde hair was uncombed. A cigarette dangled from her lower lip and her face had a sullen expression. A streaked water tumbler on the dilapidated dresser was partially filled with gin and an empty gin bottle lay nearby.

"Say listen," the woman said, "I'm respectable. I come here when I want to go on a bat. I've paid my rent. Now what the hell do you three want?"

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Taonon," Clane said, "but in this particular instance, the disguise won't work."

Her eyes were quick with startled fear. They shifted from Clane to Sou Ha and Chu Kee. Then abruptly she crossed to a closet, took out a smart, well-tailored dress, slipped it on. She put on shoes and stockings, and combed back the tangled mass of her hair. Abruptly she had transformed herself into a quick-thinking, dangerous antagonist.

"I'm Terry Clane. I know your husband."

"And who are these people?"

"Friends of mine. I'm trying to clear up a mystery. If you don't choose to answer my questions, I'll ring up Inspector Malloy, tell him where you are and let him ask the questions."

That shot told. She said, "Tell me specifically what you want to know. I'll answer."

"Do you know Edward Harold?"

She hesitated, then said, "Yes."

"You met him last night at your husband's request?"

"What makes you think I did?"

"A witness says you did, a waitress in a restaurant. Are you hiding from the police or from your husband?"

She took a quick breath, then said, "Edward Harold means nothing to me. He's friendly with my husband. We were both sorry to hear of his arrest and I was glad to hear of his escape.

"But there's another man, a business associate of my husband's. He thinks he's in love with me, and he wants to have a showdown with Ricardo. I've done nothing. But Ricardo is insanely jealous at times. I don't know how much he thinks he knows or what he'd do. And he's disappeared and I'm hiding out until I see what's happened—or whether anything's going to happen. I'm scared."

"Who is this other man? Nevis?"

"Don't be silly."

"Was it Gloster?"

"Now aren't you smart!"

Clane said, "Your husband carries quite a bit of insurance. It's payable to you. Your husband is dead."

She stiffened into frozen attention. "Ricardo dead?"

"You know he is."

"Then if you know that, you must know why he was hiding. And why I was hiding."

"You were hiding for the same reason he was?"

"Of course. He phoned me to get under cover, said the fat was in the fire. When did he die?"

"I don't know."

She studied him, then said suddenly, "That's different. Let's go back home."

Clane said, "You don't seem to show any grief."

Her manner was scornful. "You know as well as I do there's no use showing any grief over something that has happened."

Clane said dryly, "The position of the police is that you stand to profit by your husband's death."

"Meaning that I killed him?"

Clane merely met her eyes.

She took the half-filled glass of gin, poured it into the slopjar, took a hat out of the closet, adjusted it in front of the cheap wavy mirror, put on her coat, and said, "Let's go."

Chu Kee blandly held the door open. Clane stood aside to let the women precede him.

"I think," Clane said, "we'll call Inspector Malloy first."

"Call anyone you damn please," Mrs. Ricardo Taonon snapped at him. "I'm going home. And if you don't call the police, I will."

THEY went to the eight-room apartment of Ricardo Taonon, which might well have been the residence of a wealthy Hong Kong merchant. And in this setting, Daphne Taonon took on assurance.

She said to Inspector Malloy, "Mr. Clane told me you were looking for me, that you wanted to question me."

"That's right. Did Mr. Clane say what the police wanted to ask you about?"

"My husband's death."

"Well, well, well," Malloy said. "And how did Mr. Clane know that your husband was dead?"

"I don't know. He told me that my husband had been —killed."

"Murdered?"

"I gathered that was what he meant."

"When was the last time you saw your husband?"

"Last night, about ten o'clock. He was called to the telephone."

"Know who was talking?"

"No. My husband seemed very much excited, a little alarmed. He put on his hat and coat and went out. Later a friend of his telephoned, very anxious to see him. He asked me to drive him to a place where I thought my husband might be."

"Find your husband?"

"No."

"Who was this friend of your husband's?"

"I prefer not to answer that question."

"What time did you get back?"

"Some time this morning." She met his eyes boldly.

"Left your car here and then went where?"

"To a cheap Chinese hotel," she said. "I used the best disguise I could on a moment's notice."

"Why?"

"Because I was afraid."

"Of what?"

"I can't tell you that."

"It wasn't until Mr. Clane told you your husband was dead that you were willing to come back?"

"You can, of course, put it that way if you want to."

The telephone rang and Malloy answered it. He listened for several seconds, then said, "Bring your party up here. G'bye."

He hung up the receiver, walked back to his chair, settled himself comfortably, bit the tip off the end of a cigar and said, quite casually, "That call was from police headquarters. They found your husband, Mrs. Taonon."

"His body?"

"Your husband. Seems he was hiding too."

"Where?"

"San José, in an auto court. Your husband didn't drive Harold down to an auto court. *You* did that."

She looked at the police inspector with the defiance of a trapped animal, and was tense until two officers

brought in Ricardo Taonon. For a moment he stood in the doorway watchful, wary. Evidently he had not been apprised of the fact that police were there.

"My *darling!*" His wife moved toward him, face tilted. They clung in a passionate embrace, an opportunity for one swiftly whispered word.

Then Daphne moved back. "Darling, they told me you were dead. And do you know what this man Clane said? He said that I had killed you for the insurance."

Malloy said, "Taonon, you went down the peninsula, headed for Salinas, registered in an auto camp under an assumed name, and hid out for a while, didn't you?"

"I'm given to fits of nervous depression," Taonon said, "when I want to get away from everyone."

"So you got a phone call from Gloster and suddenly decided you wanted to go on one of these trips?"

Taonon hesitated, then said, "All right. I got a call from Gloster."

Clane listened absorbedly to Malloy's further questioning about Taonon's movements the evening of Gloster's murder. They tallied with what Clane had learned from Edward Harold.

"Gloster was calling Nevis as I went out of the door," Taonon ended. "I drove around to a bar for a brandy, drove a couple of hours to steady my nerves, found an auto camp that had a vacancy and went to bed."

"I see," Inspector Malloy said dryly. "And five miles farther down the road Edward Harold was staying, also under an assumed name in an auto camp. He must have followed you! And the woman who drove Harold down to that auto camp was your devoted wife. She also established Harold in the warehouse. The grocer down

in the market on the corner says she purchased the groceries for Harold in his hideout."

Taonon turned to his wife. "So," he said, and sent his fist lashing out to crash into the point of her jaw.

As the woman's figure crumpled, Malloy gripped Taonon's shirt and shook the Eurasian as a big dog might shake a cur. Abruptly he turned to the police officers. "Take them down to Headquarters—both of them."

"Do you want to take me back into custody?" Clane asked when they had gone.

"Bless you, no," Malloy said. "You're ever so much more valuable running around and playing bird dog. I wouldn't doubt a bit if the next person you dug up would turn out to be Cynthia Renton. And you, young lady, don't you take in any more washing."

"I won't," Sou Ha assured him.

"Of course, if you're really looking for work," he said, "I can give you a job."

"Thank you, I'll keep it in mind," she promised.

CYNTHIA RENTON, waiting for them at Chu Kee's, rushed toward Terry Clane. "Oh, Owl," she exclaimed. "I'm so glad you're back. What happened?"

"Lots of things," Clane said. "Ricardo Taonon disappeared and was found. His wife disappeared and was found. I have been in jail. I have seen Edward Harold and . . ."

"How is he, Owl? Tell me, how is he?"

"Naturally," he said, "he's pretty blue and discouraged. He's resentful toward me. If it hadn't been for Chu Kee here, I'd still have been . . ."

Clane broke off abruptly. The Chinese and his daughter had quietly slipped away. Clane said, "Probably thought we wanted to be alone."

"Don't we?"

"Not now, Cynthia. I'm going back to the warehouse. That will mean "taking some chances."

"All right, Owl. I'm going to take chances with you. I've got you into a mess and I'm going to be with you from now on. I've been sitting here hating myself for the way I've let you run risks on my account . . . Owl, *please* let me go with you."

"All right," he said. "Perhaps Harold will feel better about it if you clear the mystery up instead of me." Raising his voice, he called out, "Embroidered Halo!"

Sou Ha appeared almost instantly, moving through embroidered silk curtains which concealed a doorway. She had changed into Chinese garb, and Clane instinctively addressed her in Chinese. "Embroidered Halo, I have to leave upon a mission of some danger. The Painter Woman wishes to go with me. I am going to try to clear up the murder. If the man she loves is to be cleared, it would be better that Cynthia herself did it."

"The man she loves is standing beside her."

Clane flushed. "Don't be silly, Sou Ha. She is going to marry Edward Harold."

Sou Ha led them out. At the door her face, without expression, was raised to Terry Clane. "Will you always remember," she asked in Chinese, "that in the abode of my father there is a refuge for you and your friends? That such things as we can do for you are yours to command?"

"You are a dear girl," Clane said. "I am indebted to you both more than I can ever repay."

Her face flushed. "Never speak of repayment to Chinese," she flared as the door swung open.

"Owl," Cynthia said softly, when they were outside, "she changed to Chinese clothes to tell you that there is between you the gulf of racial difference. Let's get out of here, Owl, before I start bawling."

AT the warehouse Clane tried the door. It was locked. Like two furtive shadows, they moved around the building to the window through which police claimed Edward Harold had escaped. It was partly open.

Clane said, "It may be a trap. If you hear a noise when we raise the window, Cynthia—a burglar alarm or anything—just get moving. Don't wait for me."

He slipped on gloves, raised the window, boosted her through, then followed her into the silent office.

"Now what?" Cynthia whispered.

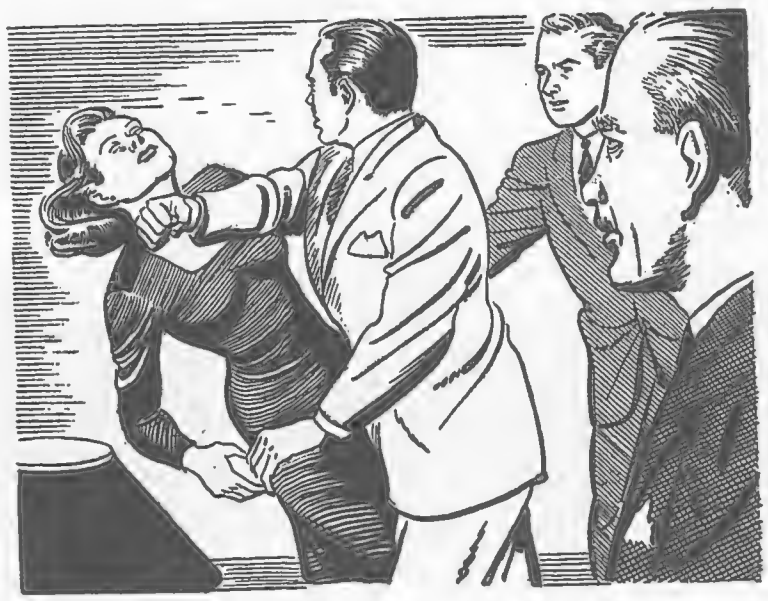
Clane said, "I want to find the paper which Gloster must have found before he was killed."

"How do you know he found a paper, Owl?"

Clane said, "Gloster came to the warehouse for something. He found Edward Harold here. That must have started him looking around. His hands got in some deep dust somewhere. Then he must have found something and taken it to the desk. The fingerprints of his left hand were outlined on the blotter as if he'd been leaning over, studying a paper. There is no thumb print. Malloy says it's because there was no dust on his thumb. But I think he had found a rolled paper in a dusty place. He went to the desk, unrolled the paper and held it with his left hand, the fingers on the blotter, the thumb on the top of the paper. So put your feminine mind to work. Where could a rolled paper have been concealed?"

"That picture molding around the top of the wall."

Clane moved a chair over to the wall, put a box on it.



While Cynthia steadied the chair, he mounted the box with his flashlight and began to search. Midway along the third wall he found a tight roll of paper.

"It's Farnsworth's handwriting," Cynthia said as they unrolled it. "Owl! It's the date he was murdered."

Clane nodded, and read:

To Whom It May Concern:

I have lost the desire to live. There is no atonement I can make, save to confess. I was trustee for money for Cynthia Renton. I invested this money in goldmining properties which I had carefully investigated. My personal money was invested in a partnership enterprise for Oriental trade. George Gloster, Ricardo Taonon, and Stacey Nevis were my associates. We all held an equal interest. We had an opportunity to plunge heavily and we plunged and lost. But the mining enterprise in which I had invested the trust moneys proved to be immensely rich. I had an opportunity to sell out at an enormous profit. Then Ricardo Taonon pointed out to me that no one knew the gold mine had been an investment of trust funds since it had all been in my name. I had only to take some money from that to recoup the partnership business, and there would still be enough left to yield Cynthia a handsome profit; and the money would only be in the nature of a loan to the partnership.

Either the man hypnotized me or I was crazy. I signed papers showing the whole gold mine was a partnership investment. Then I asked Taonon for an accounting. He told me I could draw out any sum I wished to reimburse Miss Renton for her trust funds but that the documents I had signed alleged I had acted for the partnership in the mining deal. Cynthia had lost enormous profits. Then I put five thousand in an oil deal for her. It gives every sign of simply dying on the vine. But Cynthia is asking for an accounting. I am satisfied that Edward Harold, to whom she is engaged and who has just called on me, intends to investigate.

Cynthia Renton is the real owner of all of my interest in the Eastern Art Import and Trading Company, is

entitled to all the assets of that company. She is also the real owner of the contents of the envelope which I am leaving on the desk. I have loved Cynthia Renton but I have failed her, and I have failed myself. I only hope that Cynthia will forgive me.

Taonon is evil, but the other partners are blameless. I leave no immediate relatives. I therefore give, devise and bequeath all of my individual estate, share and share alike, to George Gloster, Stacey Nevis, and Ricardo Taonon as copartners transacting business under the firm name of Eastern Art Import and Trading Company.

HORACE FARNSWORTH

"He killed himself," Cynthia said breathlessly.

"I felt certain that he did," Clane told her. "And someone slipped into the room, removed the gun, and took this letter and the envelope of papers. That made it look like murder."

"You mean Ricardo Taonon had . . ."

"No, no," Clane said impatiently. "Once you look at the evidence properly, it points to—"

A SWITCH clicked, light blazed. Inspector Malloy's voice, booming and genial, said, "Well, well, Clane. You flushed some real game this time. Cynthia Renton! And what's this paper you were talking about?"

Wordlessly Clane handed him the letter. He gave it intense study.

He looked up as Clane spoke. "You can see now what happened. Gloster found something that startled him, something that made it imperative that he meet with the others immediately. He couldn't reach Nevis at once, but he called Taonon and told him to come to the warehouse at once. Gloster had to get something here in the warehouse. He drove here. Harold was hiding here. He jumped out of the window as Gloster came in. Gloster phoned Taonon. While he was waiting for Taonon he looked around and found this note.

"The note speaks for itself. Farnsworth committed suicide. He was despondent, trapped. He took the easy way out. And Sam Kenyon, his servant, found him dead with this document beside him. Sam read it, noted that if it were found by the police—whom he would have to call—Cynthia Renton could at once claim a large part of the assets of the Trading Company. He saw a chance to get rich. He took the gun and the document to Taonon or Nevis, and made his demands. They were met and he gave up the document. He was instructed to go back to the house and call the police.

"Everyone agrees Gloster was honest," Clane went on. "A grouch, but on the square. So he wasn't in on it at all. Taonon simply told Gloster that Farnsworth had been working for the partnership in locating those Philippine investments. Gloster believed him. Then came Harold's trial and conviction. Taonon and Nevis were in a quandary. To let Harold be executed for a murder he hadn't committed was beyond the scope of their plans. They didn't dare to speak up and tell the truth . . . So they arranged for Harold to escape."

"And what of this paper?" Malloy asked.

"They didn't dare destroy it because if the worst ever came to the worst, this was a will. They decided to plant it in some place where it could be found. If the cat got out of the bag and there should be other evidence left by Farnsworth which would strip the partnership of the mining properties, they would at least have his individual estate. So they concealed the paper here. After Gloster was killed, the paper was reconcealed in its original hiding place."

"Go on," Malloy said.

"Gloster couldn't get Nevis on the phone because Nevis was at a poker game," Clane said. "But he got Taonon, and Taonon came down here."

"And killed him?"

"No. Gloster got Taonon down here. Taonon told him to call Nevis. Then Taonon skipped out. That made Gloster mad. He called Nevis at the number Taonon had given him, and he called me later on. Nevis came down here and . . ."

"No, he didn't," Malloy interrupted. "Gloster went to see him."

"How many witnesses saw Nevis and Gloster engaged in conversation?" Clane asked. "Nevis lied. Gloster never went to see Nevis. Nevis came down here to see him."

"Any evidence to prove that?" Malloy asked.

"Gloster's car. Particles of fog moisture had condensed on the windshield and had run in little rivulets down the hood. But there weren't any fan-shaped streaks on the windshield which would have been there if the windshield wipers had been at work, or any splash stains where drops of water running down from the windshield had been blown back by wind caused by the motion of the car. The fog settled some time after ten and before eleven, and Gloster's car wasn't moved after the fog settled."

Malloy scratched his head. "Well, now, Mr. Clane, you've contributed something there."

Clane went on, "Gloster had told Nevis enough over the telephone so that Nevis knew what had happened. He made up his mind right then to commit murder. He put his finger on the receiver hook to cut the connection, then raised his voice so everyone at the poker table could hear him and said he couldn't get away from the poker game, said if Gloster wanted to come up and honk the horn, he'd go down and talk with him. Nevis was gone approximately twenty minutes, ample time to drive down to the warehouse, kill Gloster and come back. I have an idea that you'll find that no one actually heard the honking of the horn except Nevis. Nevis has no alibi. And furthermore, the mute evidence of Gloster's car shows that Nevis was lying. As soon as Nevis arrived at the warehouse, Gloster must have realized his danger and started for the telephone. Perhaps to call the police."

"I began to think that it might be something like that," Malloy admitted, "after I heard Harold's story."

"*You* heard Harold's story?"

Malloy grinned. "We wouldn't have put you in with a convicted murderer unless we'd wanted to hear his story. We thought he might talk to you."

"And you had the room wired?"

"Sure," Malloy said. "Us professionals can't do this brilliant deductive reasoning that you amateurs do, so we have to rely on a little practical stuff now and then. Anyhow, you did a job on that automobile. Guess that's something we overlooked. . . . And now I have an idea perhaps you and this young lady would like to get the hell out of here, because we're going to bring Mr. Nevis down here and ask him a few questions."

"And how about Edward Harold?" Clane said.

"Well, now, if the conversation with Nevis turns out the way I think it's going to, there's just a chance a pardon might come through for Mr. Harold."

"In which event," Clane said, "I think Cynthia Renton should be the one who takes the news to him."

"We'll do it together," Cynthia said.

Clane smiled. "Three would be a crowd. I've got to go hunt up Yat T'oy, and I think it's only fair I should tell Chu Kee what has happened."

"And," Malloy said, "you might give this Chu Kee my thanks, and his good-looking daughter, too."

CYNTHIA RENTON followed Terry out. "Owl," she said, "you're leaving me just when I . . . damn it, just when I want you more than I ever wanted you in my life. Are you trying to . . . Owl . . . are you in love with that Chinese girl?"

Clane said, "She's just a dear friend, Cynthia."

"You play around with that stuff and you'll find out something about friendship you never knew before."

He moved closer to her. Suddenly her arms were around his neck and her lips, salty with tears, were against his. "Oh, Owl, I need you so much," she sobbed, "and you're going away."

"Not very far away."

She stood in the doorway with Malloy, watching Clane walk away into the darkness.

Inspector Malloy said musingly, "A remarkably talented young man."

"A rank amateur," Cynthia said, so savagely that Malloy turned in surprise. "The things a really smart man should know, he doesn't know a damn thing about!"

THE END

Puzzle 398 12/7/46

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By Helen Greenwood

NIGHTMARE ALLEY, by **William Lindsay Gresham**, is not a pleasant novel but it is a compelling and powerful one. Stan Carlisle, disillusioned by a philandering mother, joined the Ten-in-One Carnival when he was nineteen. Quick-witted and unscrupulous, Stan milked the carnival of its trade secrets and went on to bigger things as Stanton the Great, the vaudeville mentalist. With Mollie, the nice Irish kid from the carnival, he astounded audiences throughout the country. But ambition drove Stan on to a spiritualist church, guaranteed to serve up consolation from the other world.

William Lindsay Gresham

The book builds up to a shattering crescendo when Stan and a beautiful and wicked lady-psychiatrist join forces to swindle a wealthy manufacturer.

Mr. Gresham has piled horror on horror and evil on evil in this weirdly exciting book, but his detail is so authentic that the reader is gripped from the opening page to the devastating finale.

Rinehart and Company, New York. $2.50.

WOOD KAHLER'S Portrait in Laughter is a light little novel about a young Russian, Arcady Grigoroff.

Wood Kahler

Arcady was a feckless but charming young man whom women found irresistible, and who never resisted. He needed money. Eunice Barton, a slightly shopworn debutante, needed a husband. So Larry Wharton and his Russian wife, Vera, maneuvered to combine the two needs in one marriage. They had their difficulties and the project took them from New York to Florida and back again.

Complicating characters in the plot are Daisy Bell, the American-Indian; Athalia, the beautiful Western Union girl; and Paul Sanders, a graduate of Sing Sing.

Not a great book, Portrait in Laughter is a diverting one that puts no strain on the intellect.

E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. Price $2.50.

CONSTANCE and **Gwenyth Little** have written an amusing and moderately ghoulish mystery in The Black Stocking. Pleasantly zany people trip through its pages while corpses and incipient corpses are shifted about with startling rapidity.

The authentic mystery fan will object to the thinness of the plot, but The Black Stocking is a book for those who like their mysteries spiced with bright dialogue, pretty girls, and romance.

The Crime Club, Doubleday & Company, Garden City, New York. Price $2.

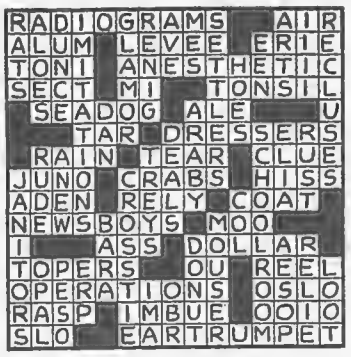
SAMUEL ROGERS, a professor of French at the University of Wisconsin, occasionally turns his hand to writing mysteries. His latest, **You Leave Me Cold!** is set on a college campus, in a boarding-house run by Dr. Chardwicke and his wife. The story opens with the mysterious illness of Ronny, a young student who was engaged to one of the girls living in the house. Professor Hatfield urges his nephew, John Frazer, to move to the Chardwickes' to try to ascertain the cause of Ronny's illness.

Ronny dies and one of the other boarders dies and an attempt is made to kill John Frazer before the strange, unhappy murderer is found.

Harper & Brothers, New York. Price $2.

QUIZZ-ICAL CROSSWORD

By Ted Shane



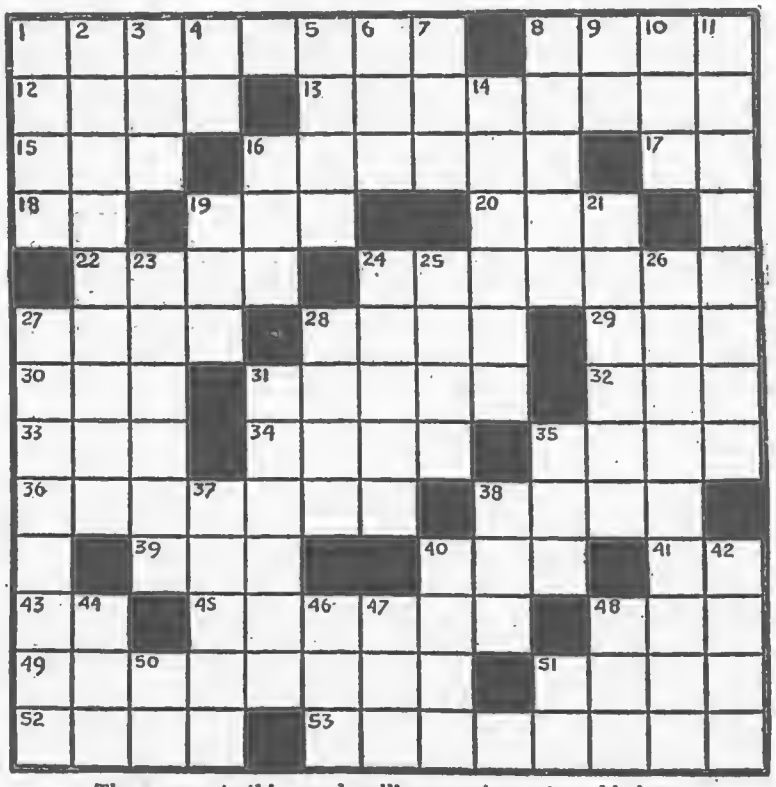
Last week's answer

HORIZONTAL

1 They used to call a gabby and conceited ass a what?
8 The closed what caused labor headaches?
12 Musical *soup* (anag.)
13 Physical jerks are a form of what?
15 Name one of Marlene Dietrich's claims to fame
16 What was *Tobacco Road*'s Mr. Lester's first name?
17 The Falkland Islands are off what continent? (abbr.)
18 Either's alter ego
19 Put on the evening feedbag in a delicate manner
20 Easy to what was a recent movie comedy?
22 Besides men, who have appendices?
24 Who is either the captain of the *Constitution* or a movie actor?
27 In the navy you are enjoined to do what to the gab?
28 In what game are bullets back to back most prized?
29 Civil War American Legion (abbr.)
30 Be off the wholesome beam
31 Footpads are what?
32 Complete: Oh wad some power the giftie —— us
To see oursels as others see us!
33 Taro paste is what?
34 Ones for our occupation forces
35 What does a printer call this mark ℌ ?
36 How long is a twinkle?
38 Mihailovich's greatest crime may've been that he was a what?
39 What's a happy man's nickname?
40 The Little Red what starred in a children's tale?
41 Vulnerable at tag
43 Canadian province (abbr.)
45 Name the supremacy of the past
48 Kind of flight school
49 The oyster, the onion, and the olive are used in what concoction?
51 It's *said* it helps (anag.)
52 Name the gal who threw the golden apple that started the Trojan War
53 The rodeo has taken the place of what show? (two words)

VERTICAL

1 Tommy Hitchcock starred in what game?
2 In what Crossroads did an event take place that shook the world?
3 The bark of the what is worse than its bite?
4 Copulative verb
5 A jitter on wheels is a what?
6 Clytemnestra called for what to kill Agamemnon?
7 Still
8 Henry James wrote the Turn of the what?
9 Howd'ye
10 Name the Cloak and Dagger division of the U. S. Army (abbr.)
11 An upstanding Bartlett would be a what? (two words)
14 What is it Tommy Manville does and does?
16 Roast beef is served in restaurants *au* what?
19 Perform holesomely
21 "Is this a what which I see before me?" asked Macbeth
23 What nationality is General Bor?
24 What kind of man leads Hollywood's most hazardous existence?
25 What moves marine mountains?
26 Gents who watch race-horse workouts are called what?
27 Wisdom is called what?
28 What barks but has no bite, can be an awful pain yet is upstanding?
31 What household utensil figured in an oily scandal?
35 Beastly parlor
37 M-8s and Mark IVs are what?
38 What government agency controls the stock exchange? (abbr.)
40 The what of Glass figured in a famed fairy tale?
42 Wassermann is known for his what?
44 What is General T. Komorowski also known as?
46 Sleepers in the nude are said to sleep how?
47 How Caesar wrote 502
48 What kind of face is round and mushy?
50 The 101 Ranch (Roman style)
51 Exclamation



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

UNCLE

AUNT

GRANDMA

GRANDPA

FATHER

MOTHER

BROTHER

SISTER

NEPHEW

NIECE

SON

DAUGHTER

What one gift would please them all?

No matter what their tastes . . . their hobbies . . . their likes or dislikes . . . there's *one* gift that will please them, each and every one.

That gift is a United States Savings Bond.

This Christmas, put at least one Savings Bond under the tree for someone you love.

Contributed by this magazine in co-operation with the Magazine Publishers of America as a public service.

ON THE BEAM

Continued from Page 8

is reversible (only on the ground) for maneuvering on airports. Waco says the tail propeller will eliminate slip-stream drag and the danger of passengers and airport personnel being struck by the blades.

Like many a postwar plane, the new Waco has a tricycle landing gear with an unusually long wheel base. The resulting lower center of gravity is expected to permit cross-wind landings of considerable severity. The entire landing-gear mechanism has been simplified to eliminate the possibility of sticking when extending or retracting.

The power plant is a 215-h.p. six-cylinder opposed Franklin air-cooled engine. A blower arrangement immediately forward of the engine provides uniform cooling.

The performance should please those who fly cross-country. Top speed at sea level is 154 m.p.h. and cruising speed is 135. Landing and take-off speed is 65 m.p.h. The service ceiling is 17,500 feet and the rate of climb at sea level is 950 feet per minute.

Maximum flying range with 60 gallons of gas is 605 miles at sea level. To give you an idea of size, the over-all length is just under 26 feet, and the wing span is 38 feet. And there's plenty of room for luggage. The price won't be disclosed until time for deliveries in February.

Is Continental's Line Popular!

Never before in the history of commercial aviation has one airplane engine powered 90 per cent of all lightplanes manufactured in the country. Yet in 1946 this is the record of Continental Motors Corp., Muskegon, Michigan.

The orders have piled up so rapidly during the year that the 3,000-a-month production in June and the 4,000 by September couldn't fill the demand. By January, 1947, Continental will be producing 5,000 engines a month. L. E. Hallman, executive sales engineer, estimated that $70,000,000 in lightplane engines had been built and sold between V-J Day and September 15 of this year.

Continental's 90-per-cent share of the aircraft-engine business (in the lightplane field) probably won't continue in 1947, but the company has shown a phenomenal growth and an enormous popularity. Its likable and popular sales manager and vice-president, D. H. Hollowell, has been one of the busiest executives in aviation.

And the line of engines had no counterpart in prewar days when engine production was rather evenly divided among a group of companies. Continental is producing 65-, 75-, 85-, 125-, 165-, 185-, and 220-h.p. power plants—just take your choice, cafeteria style.

DOES AMERICA HAVE A FREE PRESS?

Continued from Page 17

This incident brings up an interesting point in the argument of Russian versus American freedom of the press. Byrnes could assume, since an uncontrolled press exists in America, that the attack on him by Molotov would be published in the American press. Byrnes could not order publication of this speech in the American press. But Molotov could and did order publication of the Byrnes speech, thereby admitting that the press in Russia is completely subject to governmental dictation. How can such a government-controlled press be described as free?

In January, 1945, a committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors traveled 40,000 miles around the world and discussed the question of an international free press with government officials and with editors in eleven countries. The report on this trip showed that in only a few cases was there any official dissent, and editors everywhere reacted with great enthusiasm to the proposal for the establishment of a world-wide free press.

On September 13 of this year the Society pressed the United Nations for action not later than this fall on a specific program for world freedom of information of the press.

WORLD-WIDE freedom of the press is an American peace aim which must not be neglected. After the first World War, the emphasis at Versailles was placed upon the material effects of war rather than upon underlying causes. We did not insist upon the imposition of truthful news upon defeated Germany. All arrangements concerning the distribution of news was made through private agreements.

Today we must awaken to the realization that freedom of the press as we know it in this country must become an international freedom. Never before has the making of a permanent peace been as imperative as it is today. Never before has the need been so great for international understanding and international cooperation, the absence of which can only mean another war. Since the creation of the atomic bomb we must face the fact that the world can never survive another war, that the peace must succeed or we are all doomed to destruction.

In seeing the many difficulties and misunderstandings that arise between countries as they meet at the peace table, we begin to realize how the last war has narrowed the boundaries of the world. It is absolutely essential that there should be a free exchange of information. It is vitally important that all peoples should extend their interests and their knowledge beyond national boundary lines. Only through such an exchange of information can true international understanding be accomplished. Only if an international free press comes into being can there be a world-wide community of interest. And this community of interest is indispensable to a free and peaceful world.

Our own press is free and we should be more aware of the privileges and responsibilities of that freedom. As we see the newspapers of other countries failing under government censorship, our own consciousness of the solemn duty of working for a free international press should be increased. We should accept the responsibility of promoting a world-wide freedom of information.

"I'll have to be leaving by four today. I've got to be home in time to pay the girl I have cleaning my apartment!"

LIBERTY

"Were you looking for anyone in particular?"

LIBERTY

Some people feel that an unfettered press is dangerous. They believe that a freedom which leads to criticism, to the presentation of facts that are unpalatable and viewpoints that are unpopular, is both destructive and morale-breaking. But it is equally and fundamentally true that without opposition and without divergence of opinion there can never be any valid or lasting progress. Differences brought out into the open can always be used to constructive ends. The "right to know" of the people must be preserved.

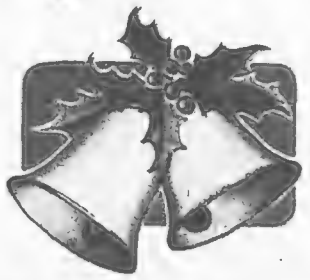
FREEDOM of the press not only has tremendous intrinsic importance, but it cannot be stressed too often that it plays an enormous part in implementing and strengthening other forms of freedom such as freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and freedom of the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to seek redress of grievances.

The citizen living in a country where there is no freedom of the press has been deprived of his "right to know." We have learned from the past that the perverted presentation of news which is found in nations where the people have been denied freedom is unquestionably one of the causes of war.

What was it if not tainted news and angled propaganda that fostered and nourished the mass hatred which drove the German people into war with such fanatical and frenzied determination?

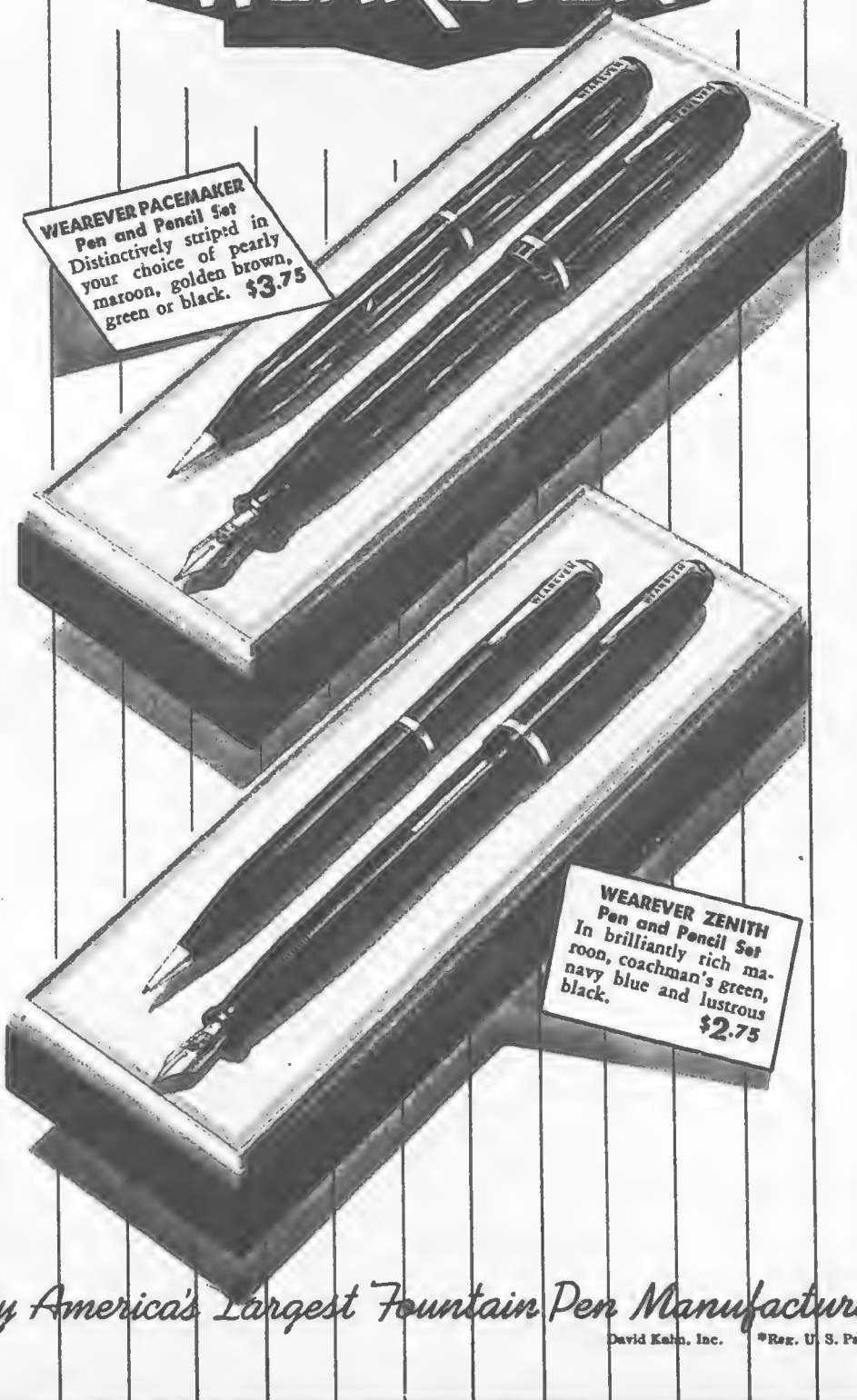
Those who seek to restrict the freedom of the press acknowledge in so doing the powerful influence of the printed word. In a dictatorship, barriers to freedom and truth are set up through control of the press. The reason for this control is not only to preserve government prestige but also because it is feared that the truth might open the eyes of the

Get Set for Christmas



WHAT a wonderful gift for Christmas . . . a Wearever Pen and a Wearever Pencil. Each, by itself, is a gift to be treasured and long remembered. *The pen,* with its "C-Flow"* feed, 14 Karat gold point, generous ink supply. *The pencil,* a veritable gem of mechanical perfection. *Combined* in the handsome gift box, presented as the beautiful Wearever Gift Set, here is a triumph of Christmas giving! This year give Wearever — as dear to the one who receives it, as it is budget-wise to the giver. David Kahn, Inc., North Bergen, N.J.

WEAREVER*


WEAREVER PACEMAKER
Pen and Pencil Set
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WEAREVER ZENITH
Pen and Pencil Set
In brilliantly rich maroon, coachman's green, navy blue and lustrous black.
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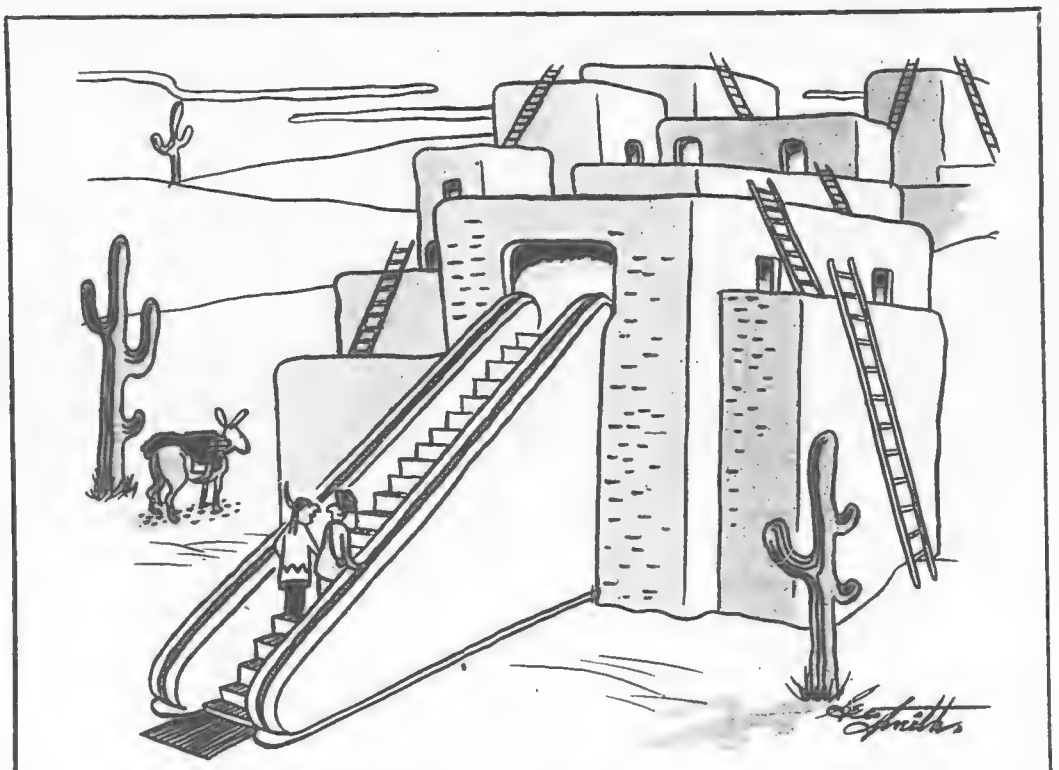
—by America's Largest Fountain Pen Manufacturer

David Kahn, Inc. *Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



"Chief Sitting Bird sprained his ankle."

LIBERTY

people and quite literally set them free.

Because of its importance to our own and to world safety, we must attempt to expand our horizons and promote an international free press. This is not because America wishes to pursue some sort of monopolistic scheme to expand American news interests all over the globe. Actually just the opposite is true, since real world-wide press freedom implies equal availability of sources of information, so that no country would be forced to receive all or the bulk of its news through New York or London or Moscow or Berlin or any other place.

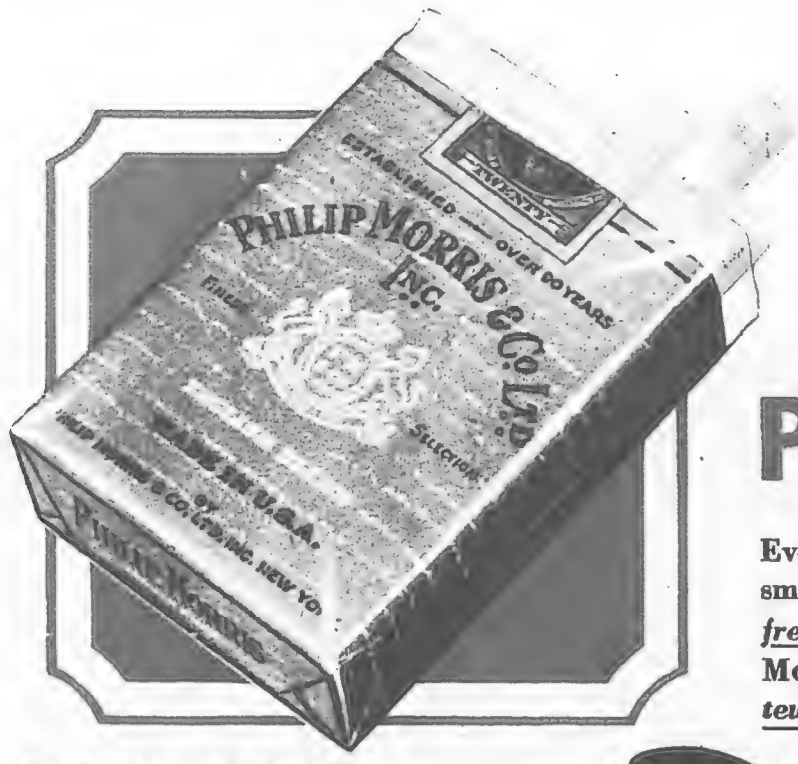
To be more practical, the actual basic requirements which must be fulfilled to lay the foundations of an international free press might be outlined as follows:

1. News at its source must be freely available to all newsmen everywhere.
2. There must be a free exchange of news between newspapers of the world.
3. Newsmen of any country must be granted the same sort of protection and immunity which is accorded to the diplomatic agents of any country.
4. There must be no preferential transmission facilities.
5. There must be an adequate and vastly expanded world communications system and a low, uniform, nondiscriminatory rate for transmission.

It is true that the world communications system would be a very expensive project, but the immense gains that would accrue in the strengthening of world co-operation and understanding could not possibly be measured in any monetary terms.

We do have a free press in America, but we do more than accept this privilege with smug self-satisfaction. The goal of international press freedom is more than an inspiring but vague ideal. It is a cause which we must continue actively to support and to foster for the sake of the future peace and well-being of the entire world.

THE END



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VETERANS' Bulletin Board

BY MATT URBAN

"HOME SWEET HOME" just isn't going to be for the 4,000,000 veterans who, according to the Census Bureau, are looking for homes or apartments.

The big search has been on ever since V-E Day, and, even so, slight relief is all that can be hoped for by late 1947.

In the meantime veterans, fed up with all this planning on paper, are beginning to demand that some definite action be taken.

Although these veterans, on average, cannot afford to pay more than $43 in rent or $5,500 as purchase price, more than 2,200,000 of them want and need homes so badly that they are willing to rent, buy, or build at today's high prices.

Yet top advice is for veterans not

Attack it!

to buy on the present market, if they can possibly avoid it, on the ground that supply of materials will catch up sooner or later and construction costs will come down.

At present the high cost of land, material, and labor makes it impossible to build large numbers of decent homes that veterans can afford to buy or rent. Thus most new homes built with veteran priorities and intended for veteran use are selling for the maximum permissible charge of $10,000. These new homes are equivalent in value to $4,000-to-$5,000 prewar homes.

For the more desperate veterans there is such a thing as going at it in the safe and right way. The best bet is to solve it as an individual problem on an individual basis. Your contractor will get you the veteran's preference and priority.

The Federal Housing Administration and its Housing agencies can help a lot. All the Veterans Administration can do is investigate the housing loan application *after* the loan has been closed by the lender. They send out an appraiser to inspect the plans and specifications if a loan is to be made prior to the completion of the house. You cannot expect the VA to police construction, contracts, or priorities; that responsibility rests upon the veteran purchaser and the FHA.

However, the VA finds it necessary to urge veterans who are planning to build, to check the reliability of the builder before signing any contract.

Play safe and examine plans and specifications carefully; a lawyer can help if necessary.

Insist on a definite cost price in the contract, with no provisions to allow for inclusion of increased production cost. Don't accept a deed until all work has been completed in accordance with the contract. Ground and grading, street conditions, and sewage-disposal facilities must be considered.

Make sure that the contract for building contains a clause that will make it void and will make any deposits returnable if for any reason a VA loan guaranty cannot be obtained.

Veterans must demand that Congress, the Civilian Production Administration, real-estate interests, and builders pitch in and work as a team in Wilson Wyatt's Housing Program. The 50-per-cent allocation of building materials for home building could be very easily raised to as high as 90 per cent. Home-seeking vets advocate the enactment of the Wagner-Ellender-Taft long-range housing bill. Your own state can be made to help out, as was shown by New Jersey's recent approval of a $41,000,000 emergency housing program.

To get results we must give up our ideal approach, with its normal peacetime background, and must attack this housing problem as problems of war were attacked—on an all-out basis.

VETERANS: The Bulletin Board is *your* department, the watchdog of your interests—written and edited by a combat veteran of World War II. Make the most of it! Write in your gripes and your ideas. No names will be used without permission. Address Veterans' Bulletin Board, c/o Liberty, 37 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

AL TAKES A POWDER

Continued from Page 15

gossip like a sponge. Therefore you can find time for Beanie's problem."

Note here my clever trend of thought! If, through my offices, Beanie triumphs over this Wiltshire Cadbury, I will sit prettier with Connie.

Al moans. "I tell you, Freddy, this is insoluble."

"Quite, Al," I says. "I don't expect miracles, but I do demand endeavors. And unless I see one"—I thump the fountain smartly—"well, Diffenderfer down the street is culling up a splendid reputation for his Three-Star Strawberry Supreme."

With that stern warning, I depart.

HAVING assigned Al a task, I am displeased some afternoons later to find him absent. Henry, his pinch hitter, holds sway.

"Where," I says sharply, "is the head monkey?"

"His nibs?" Henry shrugs. "Oh, he went away for a couple days. Restin', he is. Says he's tired. And don't ask me where he's at, 'cause I dunno. But if he ain't fishin', I'll eat your shirt."

Privately, I am annoyed. With Beanie's love life in jeopardy, Al goes callously off, fishing. I shall have something to say to that one.

But suddenly I think what do I need of Al? I, Sandford, am capable of advising this lad. Then, one thought begetting another, I remember a recent movie and—Preston!—like a flash, I come up with the solid dope for Beanie.

At that juncture there are alarums and excursions. Presently a howling horde defiles the emporium. I recognize it as the grammar school, come in a body for sustenance. Unpretentious in the wriggling serpentine mass is Beanie. He looks like an undernourished ghost.

It takes this astute observer but a moment to perceive why. Natalie Pike, bigger than I remember her but still spidery legwise, is parked in a booth. She has gray eyes, red-gold hair, and sports a bunch of lilies-of-the-valley on her dress. By her side, exuding proprietorship, sits a dark good-looking kid. Beanie Parker, palpably outcast and wretched at the fountain, directs toward this citizen glances such as a Hatfield would forbear to bestow upon a McCoy.

I wait a space. Then, unobtrusively, I edge over to Beanie.

"Well, Casanova," I says, "how's tricks?"

He beetles brows at me. "Aaagh, go soak yer head!"

"It might pay you, my little man," I says, "to cultivate civil speech. Now, then, I take it that the—ah—squire of dames in yonder enclosure is Wiltshire Cadbury?"

Beanie glares across the room cobra fashion. "Yeah, that's the jerk. So what?"

"For the last time, I tell you, he's not home!"

LIBERTY

"So," I says, "it happens that I am Oh, Fay with conditions surrounding this projected cotillion. And I may say, in passing, that your technique is deplorable."

"Ga-aah," growls my bride-to-be's brother, "talk English, can'cha?"

"Fluently," I says. "Look, Beanie, you'll never partner that little amber-headed cupcake at the Misses Sawyer's wingding by mooning around like a calf with asthma. Thing to do—" And, keeping in mind Fred MacMurray, the hero of that movie, I explain at length.

"Well, maybe," he says. "But I ain't never seen you actin' like that with my sister."

"Ha!" I says. "Certainly not. Didn't I just point out that some of us are the subtle Charles Boyer type?" With which I withdraw, leaving Beanie chewing it over.

Presently I am immersed in conversation with Henry, likewise a pineapple tutti-fruitti. And I have practically forgotten the woes of the small fry when—

A localized tumult arises above the prevailing babble. Sounds of scuffling follow.

I whip around—to find Beanie anchored by the booth harboring the coveted pulchritude. Moreover, he has a grip on Miss Pike's left wrist. With his other hand he skillfully fends off Wiltshire Cadbury, who seeks to impede his progress.

"Now, lissen, Natalie," Beanie's voice comes crescendo, "I'm sick of the way you're actin' with this droop. So I'm takin' you outa here right now. See?"

Inwardly I applaud.

I check the cheers, though. Because Natalie bounces to her feet, cheeks bricky. "You leave go of me, Horace Parker!" she shrieks.

Beanie heeds not this injunction. Contrariwise, he gives a great yank at the Pikean wrist. And Miss P. comes out of the booth. But not precisely unarmed. As she whirls past the table, she catches up a strap. Tethered to the strap is a history book and a non-best-selling tome on simple arithmetic.

Miss Pike, however, eschews perusing these delights. Instead she blows her top, like Mount Edna. With a convulsive movement she jerks free of Beanie. A second later, both hands clutching the strap, she spins hammer-thrower style. And—wham! Roughly fifty per cent of the Shadow Orchard grammar-school curriculum socks Beanie beside the head.

As a stunned silence enshrouds the establishment, Beanie subsides to the figurative greensward. Passes a moment. Then pandemonium breaks—led by Wiltshire Cadbury who, despite his genteel aspect, owns a voice notable for raucousness. During the cacophony Beanie reclines like a bopped blowfish.

Miss Pike gazes downward, with frigidity. "Horace Parker," she says, "don't you ever dare speak to me again!" Then she turns to the jeering scion of the Cadburys. "Wiltshire, please take me home!"

All of which impels Sandford inconspicuously to slide from the scene. But now it is obvious to me that between the modus operandis of Fred MacMurray and Beanie Parker yawns a vast gulf. But vast!

THAT evening I am planting petunias on behalf of Mrs. Sandford, my maternal mother, when an imperious honking sounds. I glance up to see the Parker car, with Connie in the Jehu's seat. Heart leaping, I lope curbward.

"Hello, hello, hello-oh," I says hospitably. "Fall out and—"

I pause. The dreamdust is transfixing me with eyes by the Knickerbocker Ice Company.

"You," she says, skipping preambles, "are the lowest, most despicable man in this town."

I gape. "Wh-wha—"

"You know exactly what I mean." Connie curls contemptuous lip. "Horace told me everything. And you have little to do, Freddy Sandford, amusing yourself at Horace's expense. Making him the butt of half his school! Imagine you, a grown-up, urging a child to use cave-man tactics on another child! Faugh! You're disgusting."

"Who, me?" I play for time.

"Yes, you. Telling him women like to be mastered and that you figure him a potential Humphrey Bogart. Egging him on to—to maul little Natalie. And all so you and that awful Henry could laugh your idiotic selves hoarse. Well, you made a fine mess. Because the whole side of poor Horace's head is swollen, and he's got a black eye, and a pretty sight he'll be at the cotillion. And—"

"Oh, gosh!" I wedges in. "There's more?"

"There is. Mrs. Pike phoned mother, and she's furious."

The injustice of this smites me. "What's biting Mrs. Pike?" I asks. "Her kid didn't get a black eye."

Connie stamps. "Oh-hhh, you're impossible! Mrs. Pike said she absolutely forbids Natalie even to dance with Horace at the cotillion, let alone be his partner. And every bit of it's your fault. And until you straighten things out, Freddy Sandford, you needn't call me or try to see me."

With that the loveboat weighs anchor. And distraught is the word for Frederick.

WELL, there you have it. Sandford, football of Fate, sets out to do a good deed and where does it get him? Spang in the tomato bisque aw Croton, that is where. And Al, who could be of use now, off gamboling on the green. A fine state of affairs!

Late the next afternoon I reach a decision. Through Al, indirectly, I bog down in this Mire of Misery. Very well! Al will get me out, or else—

Thus resolved, I seek his modest dwelling.

But the house is barred and shuttered. And an empty milk bottle on the back stoop does not help. A note in the bottle says: "Leave no more till further notice."

Thwarted, I return to the business district. While searching for a parking place, my disposition is not improved at sight of Natalie Pike and Wiltshire Cadbury ambulating flagrantly hand-in-hand. Miss Pike wears dark blue pansies today.

They pass, and I head for Al's. Outside the sundae station stands Henry, resplendent in white apron, conversing with young Kathleen (Mavourneen) Foy, Al's niece. Their backs are to me.

". . . and give my respects to his nibs, Mavourneen," I hear Henry saying, as quietly I approach.

instantly the Sandford brain clicks. Without doubt, Mavourneen Foy knows the whereabouts of that fish-minded soda popper. Realizing this, I foxhole into a doorway.

Peeking out a moment later, I note Mavourneen making for the bus stop. This is in order, the Foy residence being in a woodsy glen some three miles from Shadow Orchard. Then, intuitively, all is clear: Al hides out at the Foys'. But now Frederick, a Mountie hot after his man, takes the trail.

Shooting the works, I do not even accost Mavourneen. Instead I dart back to the jaloppy. A short space later, down upon the Foy hacienda thunders Sandford.

I have to turn sharp right off Highway 479B onto a dirt road. This continues a quarter mile. Then—

A rustic bungalow with wide veranda. And in shirt sleeves, likewise rocking chair—Al. His feet are on the veranda railing; his mouth is open. As I impinge, he moves not, save dreamily to brush away imaginary flies.

At least, I reflect bitterly, Nero had the grace to stay awake and fiddle while Rome burns. But, with me in a state to make the Chicago fire look like a senile glowworm, what does Al do? He sleeps!

Redheaded is the word for Frederick.

WHEREFORE I lay hold of the socially prominent feet. A deft twist and feet hit veranda.

Al jumps in his rocker like a needled grampus. "Wha-wha-wha—" he ejaculates, without coherence.

"Look, my trifling friend," I says disdainfully. "If you think that with my entire future at stake you can comport yourself like a resident of Tobacco Road, you are vastly mistaken."

"Tobac—huh! I—why, Freddy! What brings you here?"

But before I can reply, he assumes a whiny tone. "Now, Freddy, I had dedicated this afternoon to—to peace. Early today my wife and three children, plus certain Foys promulgated a picnic. They—"

"Al! I am not interested in the antics of your relatives. Conversely —" I spill the dirt.

Al looks at me in horror. "Oh, Freddy!" he groans. "To think of Horace reduced to ridiculousness in public assemblage! This could have grave consequences."

"I'm telling you," I snaps, exasperated, "we already got the consequences. Connie shuns me like the ague."

Just then Kathleen (Mavourneen) Foy drifts in, having caught the bus I leave in my wake. K. M. is a lush Celtic dish with crow's-wing hair and mischievous black eyes.

"Hello, Freddy! Hello, Uncle Al!" she says, and dives into her domicile.

"Say," I observes, momentarily distracted, "there's a one that blossomed out while I'm overseas. Good-looking pigeon, too."

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Al nods absently. "Yes, Kathleen is currently sixteen and heads her class in high school. She— H'm! Good-looking, Freddy?"

"Very," I confirms. "But it has no bearing on the fact that you basely slid out from under in the matter of Beanie's love affair."

Thereupon Al does two unacceptable things: (*a*) He snaps his fingers. (*b*) He yawns. "N-n-n—uuuh, not b-basely, Freddy," he smothers the yawn, but ineffectually.

"See here," I barks, "I require your undivided att—" I pull it, astounded.

"Z-z-z-zzz," Al is purring happily.

I peer at him. His eyes are closed, his breathing is regular and there is upon his countenance a strange look of satisfaction. Beyond cavil, he is asleep again.

I depart, nashing my teeth.

SOME forty-eight hours later Al calls me at the office. He desires, he states, to explain. And will I drop in after work?

"Very well," I agrees coldly. "But the explanation had better be classic."

Upon entering the ice-cream joint, I find Natalie Pike moored at the bar.

Her floral arrangements consist of a cluster of violets, and she delicately wolfs a cherry marshmallow.

Saluting the hoyden suitably, thumb in ear and fingers wiggling, I address Al. "Now, my man," I says, "no shilly-shally! Speak up!"

He beckons me out of earshot of Natalie. "Sit down, Freddy," he says anxiously, "and order what pleases your fancy, compliments of the management."

"Ha!" I begins. "If you think to appease—" But suddenly Al lifts a hand.

"Good afternoon, Horace," he says, loudly and cordially.

I wheel. In the doorway stands Beanie Parker, like a freckled specter with vestigial black eye.

His advent has a profound effect upon Natalie Pike. Emitting an "Eeek!" as if sighting a serpent, she bounces off her stool. But Beanie bars the path.

"Well, Natalie," he says, swallowing nervously, "I see you got my violets."

Even I, the uninformed, sense tenseness in the moment. Natalie's lips are tight but her gray eyes are wide. Then, involuntarily, "Wh-why, Horace! You mean *you've* been sending me these lovely flowers?"

"Aw," Beanie kicks floor covering, "it wasn't nuthin'."

To starboard Al looses off a relieved sigh. The next second, magicianlike, he confects two double cherry marshmallows.

"Suppose," he interjects with suavity, "you children sit down and enjoy these!"

AS I goggle, perplexed, there blows up a gale of girlish laughter. Into the spa, face flushed and eyes ashine, pours Mavourneen Foy. A nose behind, but no less exhilarated, runs Wiltshire Cadbury.

"Oh, Uncle Al," chirrups Mavourneen, "we've had the most successful day! And Wiltshire was a perfect lamb. He just helped me *compel* people to give. You've no idea"—her onyx eyes feast upon the pride of the Cadburys—"how fascinating Wiltshire can—"

She fades before a stricken "Uh-hhh!" All eyes flash to its author. Same is Wiltshire Cadbury, and clearly, for the first time, Wiltshire becomes conscious of Natalie Pike.

"Oh, gosh!" gasps Wiltshire, clapping hand to head.

Right there I get an insight into the terrific poise prevalent among the dungaree-rolled-up-shirt-tail-out generation. Though something manifestly reeks in Denmark and/or Shadow Orchard, Miss Pike behaves like a cool little queen. She looks a hole through Wiltshire and addresses Beanie.

"Horace," she says succinctly, "I am sure that if you asked a girl to the movies, you would not go out with an—er—you would not forget the appointment. And I am sure, too, that you will not forget our engagement—for the cotillion."

"Huh—WHUH!" Dazed, Beanie drops his spoon.

Then Natalie loses a soupçon of dignity on account she practically has to drag Beanie to the door.

"Hey!" Wiltshire Cadbury rockets back to life. "I—Natalie! Wait!"

He lunges forward. But Mavourneen Foy curls herself around his arm, like a boa constrictor of Irish extraction.

"Why, Wiltshire," she cries, dismayed, "you're not going? After bringing me here for a banana split!"

"Two banana splits?" Al oils in. "Coming up."

WELL, ere I can cross-examine him, Al gives me the scram sign. Frederick wafts homeward. But as I await dinner, the doorbell rings. Connie Parker enhances our veranda.

"Freddy," she says, devouring your correspondent with navy blue eyes, "I simply had to rush over and tell you right away. I think you're just the sweetest boy in Shadow Orchard, Freddy."

I start, but keep control. "Ha, my girl," I says, albeit puzzled, "it would seem I change color like the camellia. The other day I am the lowest-down—"

"Oh, Freddy," the heartbalm winces, "don't rub it in! I admit I was mistaken. But how should I know that all the while you were—er—fixing things for Horace?"

I ope my mouth uncertainly. But Kismet, on my side for once, removes the give-away words therefrom.

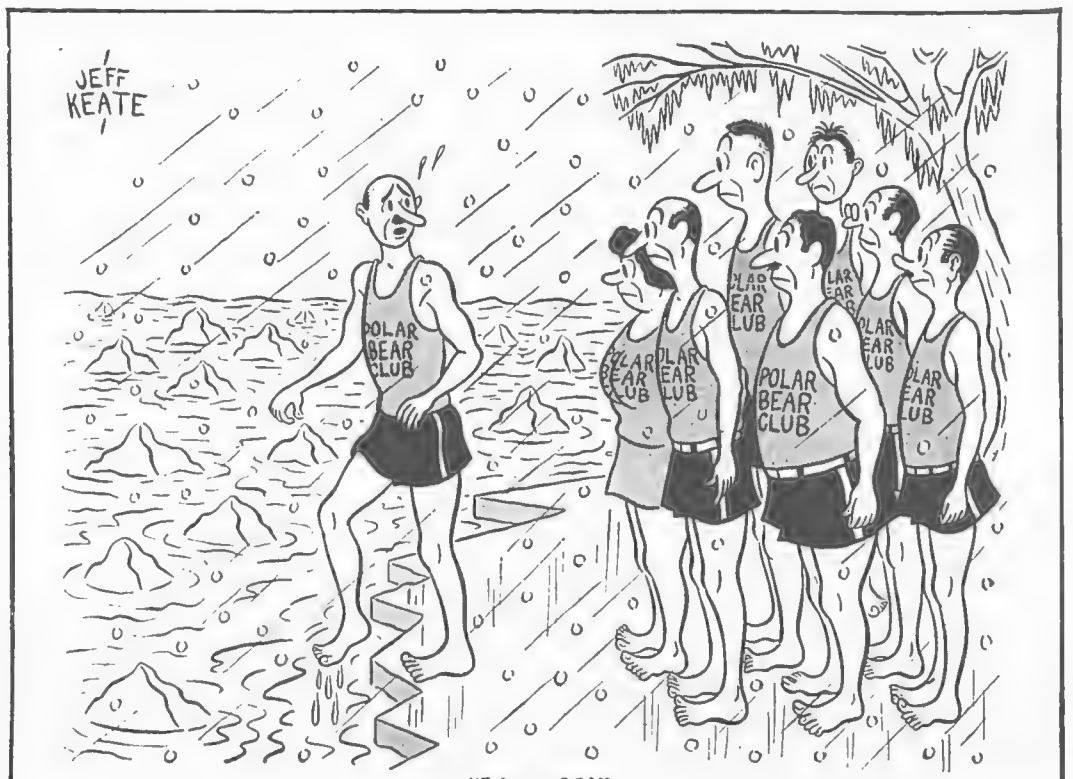
"Oh, that!" I says with nonchalance.

"Horace," goes on Connie, "was a little—well—incoherent, so I still don't understand just what you did. But Horace thought it very clever. Anyhow, after he told me, I made him wash his face and go apologize to Mrs. Pike. Then Natalie begged, and Horace begged, and Mrs. Pike finally relented. And they'll look too too cute together at the cotillion. Freddy, you're definitely solid. You—Incidentally, what are you doing tonight?"

"Well," the Sandford face is an unreadable mask, "my social calendar calls—"

"Don't be a drip!" Connie evacuates the veranda. "I'll expect you around eight thirty."

Ecstatically-befogged is the hyphenated word for Frederick.



"It's cold!"

LIBERTY

BOUND trystward, I pause at Al's. I find the great man contemplating the Infinite like a yo-yo.

"Al," I says, "I may inform you that my canary is back in the cage, and contrite. But this requires clarification."

He emerges from his trance. "Ah, Freddy," he says. "Initially, your inference that I looked dispassionately upon Horace's affaire d'Lamour wronged me. On the contrary I viewed Horace's loss of appetite with profound concern. In my considered opinion, the boy boasts digestive prowess second only to your own. Therefore I am—um—grooming Horace, hoping for another client of your magnificent proportions. But with his indisposition exercising an insalubrious effect upon my sales curve, I—"

"Al," I bang the bar, "sordid commercialism is not under discussion."

"Very good," he says, reproved. "But it accounts for my retirement to the Foys'. There, in sylvan surroundings, I brooded upon the situation. But before leaving I deemed it advisable to order daily bouquets sent to Miss Pike by Moriarity and Murphy, Florists. These were invariably accompanied by a card reading: 'From an unknown admirer.'"

"What? You—" Then mortification overwhelms me. "Al," I says sheepishly, "you were in control, and I—I practically plumbered the works?"

"No, no, Freddy," he says handsomely; "though, following the manipulations of your fine Eyetalian hand, I doubted whether success could be attained. But presently I was greatly relieved when the grapevine brought the intelligence that, despite Horace's ill-advised display, Miss Pike had still not formally accepted Wiltshire. And but for you, Freddy, I might yet be seeking a solution vainly."

"Me?" I register surprise.

"Quite so. You provided the key when you pointed out that my niece Mavourneen is of personable appearance—a circumstance hitherto escaping me."

"Continue," I says, reassured.

"Instantly, then," continues the genius, "the idea of causing a siren to sing to Wiltshire was born. For some time, Freddy, I have considered Wiltshire capable of fickleness. He seemed to me a ready victim for the wiles of an—ahem—older woman."

"Al," I says, awed, "this smacks of the stupendous."

He waves insouciantly. "Simple, Freddy. Particularly when I recalled that Mavourneen is a collector for our local Community Chest, and recently she termed collecting a lonely pursuit."

"Step on it, Al!" I urges. "Constance awaits, palpitating."

"Yesterday afternoon," Al says, "I chanced to overhear Wiltshire inviting Natalie to attend the cinema after school today. Wherefore I

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seized Opportunity by the fetlock, as the fella says."

"Al," I warns, "explicitness, please!"

"Coming up," says Al, from habit. "Miss Pike left presently, with female friends. But at some personal sacrifice—two black-and-white nut sundaes for free—I induced Wiltshire to remain. During the ensuing consumption, I phoned Mavourneen. Mavourneen listened intelligently to my instructions, and caught the next bus."

As a one privy to the mental processes of the gods, I maintain reverent silence.

"After the introduction," proceeds Al, "Mavourneen smiled upon Wiltshire. And Wiltshire visibly forgot many things — including, doubtless, his own name. Subsequently Mavourneen deposed that she intended waiving school today in favor of Community Chest collecting. But, a girl of some histrionic ability, she shivered prettily at the thought of adventuring alone down some of the leafy lanes and bosky dells beautifying Shadow Orchard's environs. She spoke nervously of tramps and footpads.

"And the next thing"—Al smiles with mysticism, "I was gratified to hear Wiltshire chivalrously promising to play hooky and accompany her."

"Al," I whispers, "we have here—greatness."

"Then," concludes Al, "it was child's play to inform and coach Horace. Also to get a message to Miss Pike, stating that her unknown admirer would reveal himself at a specific hour in my refreshment parlor. Having in mind feminine curiosity, I felt sanguine of Miss Pike's appearance. That, I think—No, one thing more! I charged Horace to name you to Connie as the sole author of this—could I, with modesty, say scintillant scheme, Freddy?"

"Al," I breathes, cloister-voiced, "your brain should be studied closely by John Hopkins in behalf of posterity."

"Don't suggest it, Freddy!" He looks alarmed. "I wince at publicity. If— Oh, by the way! I dislike obtruding the — er — monetary. But Moriarity and Murphy, Florists, have rendered a bill. Additionally, much edible material has crossed this counter, for which I still await remuneration. The—"

I QUIET him with lavish gesture. "Put the works on my account, Al," I says, "and go to your downy with tranquil mind. You have earned a night's repose."

"Thank you, Freddy," he nods, pleased. "I anticipate a relaxing evening with Kant — or possibly Schopenhauer."

"Yeah?" I bail out of my stool. "Why them especially?"

"Oh," says Al, "I feel the need of a little light reading."

THE END

Woman-Talk

BY MARGARET FISHBACK

IT'S IN THE BAG! — Practically *anything* will fit into the smart new bag known as the Conover Cover Girl Hat Box. Round as a biscuit, busy as a bee, it was unveiled for the press at a unique luncheon given at Harry Conover's Model Agency. Twelve "Cover" girls demonstrated its varied uses, while fascinated reporters gobbled first-rate picnic lunches which had been handed them in miniature replicas of the box, 8 inches in diameter. Cold chicken on cardboard plates neatly sealed in cellophane, and a brace of sandwiches nestled snugly in the round

over-the-arm boxes. Some guests drew maroon or green "Lizardgater grain" bags; others a conveniently neutral "water-snake grain." Parading through the agency rooms went the models. One depicted the schoolgirl, carrying her books in the hatbox; the housewife, her groceries. Hurray, now we marketers can look chic with our carrots and beans and bluefish and franks over our arms! A mother and diminutive daughter carried their respective wardrobes in the regulation and the miniature boxes, while an office girl opened *her* hatbox to disclose her date costume scheduled for 5.01 P.M. A genuine Pan American hostess opened *her* hatbox to reveal extra blouses and dresses for flights and stopovers. Finally came a sumptuous Conover model wearing a John-Frederics hat, and carrying two others in her adaptable python-grain bag, which, like the others, measured 14 inches across, and was 6½ inches deep. It was the professional model who discovered the hatbox as a convenient carry-all and it grew to be the trademark of the profession. Because of its practicality and attractiveness, it became apparent to alert designers at Loyal Leather Products—29 West 34th Street, New York 1—that the round hatbox would be excellent for general feminine use. Soo-o-o Loyal and Harry Conover put their canny heads together, and now I know what to ask S. Claus for come Christmas! The retail price throughout the country is scheduled to be $13.65 plus 20-per-cent luggage tax, according to vital statistics that I managed to glean from the bags' sponsors. The zipper-closed hatbox has a waterproof lining and there's a large mirror inside the top.

KEEP YOUR CHINS UP, CHUMS! —Roy E. Tilles, president of the Gotham Hosiery Company, believes that not until next spring can we count on having a real stocking wardrobe again. At a recent luncheon the new Gotham hosiery fashions were revealed by shapely young women who undulated down a runway garbed in slippers, stockings, and abbreviated fur coats, most of which stopped well above the knee to display the new "tattooed" stockings. One model wore nylons sporting an impertinent butterfly perched on the left knee. The stockings were so sheer that the tattoo appeared to be part of the model's epidermis. A purchaser of Gotham stockings may choose as her tattoo a heart, a dove with a love letter, a tiny horseshoe, a butterfly, or a Cupid with bow and

arrow, and have it applied indelibly to one of each pair of stockings purchased, either on knee or ankle. For evening, gold, bronze, and copper stockings were shown in the sheerest weave ever made, with no reinforcement in toe or heel. As I left, I chatted with radio broadcaster Pegeen Fitzgerald, who says she gets seven hard wearings out of each pair of the metallic stockings, despite their diaphanous sheerness.

BLUE DANUBE—OR RED?

Continued from Page 11

ing in Vienna and informed the director that it was thereafter a Russian firm. Herr Bauer was told he could remain as managing director if he signed a paper recognizing DDSG as a Soviet company. Herr Bauer, a rarely tough-minded Austrian, refused. The Russians also demanded the firm's cash balances in four Vienna banks. Whereupon General Mark Clark notified the banks that such withdrawals would not be permitted, since DDSG was not considered a German firm (as the Soviets claimed).

THE Russians and the Austrians are still arguing this vital point—with the Austrians getting all the support the western allies can give them. Meanwhile the Russians remained in the DDSG's main offices, located inside the British zone in Vienna, until June 11. Then they suddenly pulled out—leaving company records and such quite intact. They informed the unco-operative Herr Bauer that DDSG main offices would be set up by them on the firm's dockside property in the Russian zone. With that they offered DDSG central-office employees double salaries and large pensions if they would come with the Russians. Among low-salaried workers, 177 out of 246 accepted. But only forty out of some 250 skilled craftsmen shifted over to the new Soviet firm's location. This move split the DDSG into two parts—with neither section able to exercise more than small "token operations" on the river. This situation still exists.

The controversy over the legal ownership of DDSG stems from the Soviets' interpretation of the famous Potsdam Agreement. According

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"Second childhood!"

LIBERTY

to Potsdam, "German-owned" firms in Austria were to be taken over as reparations due the U.S.S.R. But General Clark has been trying ever since last May to get the Russians to define exactly what they mean by a "German asset." For the Americans, as well as the Austrians, the future status of DDSG stands as a significant test case. If the Russian claim wins out, the Soviets will not only gain control of the DDSG and the Danube, but of other Austrian-located firms worth scores of millions of dollars.

Like most big corporations, DDSG's ownership has been varied. The prewar Austrian government owned 26 per cent of it; and Credit Anstellt, the great Austrian bank, owned 51 per cent. This shifted in 1936, when the Italians granted DDSG a loan and took over a 46-per-cent interest —but with the fixed restriction that the firm would remain Austrian, under Austrian operation. When the Nazis gobbled up Austria, they forced the Italians to sell them their share —at a very low price. The Austrians today insist the Germans got their control under pressure. The Soviets say the German move into DDSG makes it a "German asset"—and, hence, now a property of the Russians. Neither the western allies nor the Austrians believe that this argument would stand up in court. The Russians and Austrians have talked about negotiations for a settlement since last May, but they have got nowhere at all. What the Russians frankly want is dominant control of DDSG—otherwise, control of the upper Danube.

And this Austrians and western allies alike are resisting tooth and nail.

THE reason they resist is that they know how the Soviets have taken over and monopolized shipping everywhere on the lower Danube. In all the Danubian countries which the Red Army liberated, the Russians moved swiftly to replace the local shipping companies with new firms in which they took fifty-fifty ownership, plus actual operational control. In Bessarabia (now part of the Soviet Union and close to the mouth of the Danube) they founded the Soviet-Danube Shipping Company, known as SDGP. The Soviets captured 1,600 or more Danubian ships, tankers, and barges. They were German-owned, Austrian, Hungarian, Yugoslav, or Rumanian—a few even Czech-owned. Most of these seized vessels were incorporated into the new Soviet-Danube Shipping Company. As a result, it now owns the best ships, and most of the ships, south of Vienna. That is a rich commercial prize in itself.

But this was only a first step. The Russians then merged two Rumanian firms into the Sovrom Transport Company—a Soviet-Rumanian shipping concern. They made similar innovations in Yugoslavia. And in Budapest they obtained half ownership and control of the largest Hungarian navigation company, which is known as MFTR. How the Soviets acquired a 50-per-cent interest in MFTR—and without putting up one cent of cash—is described by Hungarians, Austrians, and western allies' observers as being typical of Soviet "economic penetration" in the Danubian countries. In any case, it's certainly an interesting operation.

It so happened that Austria's DDSG owned important coal mines in Hungary. Although German "ownership" of DDSG was challenged by the Austrians, and undecided legally in Vienna, the Russians promptly took over that firm's coal mines in Hungary as reparations. Then they gave these coal mines to the Hungarian shipping firm (MFTR) and announced that this unilateral transfer constituted a 50-per-cent Soviet investment in MFTR. Beautifully simple, isn't it?

Whatever Western courts might make of the procedure, the Hungarians had to accept. MFTR officials in Budapest were also given a shrewdly drafted contract. It provided that the shipping company's general manager will be a Soviet citizen and in direct charge of all operations and personnel. It is also reported to provide that the crews on the Hungarian ships need not be Hungarians —but that the ships will fly the Hungarian flag. The general manager's authority is so great that Hungarians insist the Russians now have complete control of the company. It is proposed that after three years a new Soviet-Hungarian Shipping Company (Meszhart by name) will absorb the old Hungarian firm.

The terms of this same Soviet-Hungarian shipping agreement provide, for instance, that the Hungarians must meet all expenses for the maintenance of the free port of Csepel, an island just below Budapest. But the Russians get 50 per cent of all of MFTR's profits. Hungarian shippers think that's pushing a partner rather too hard. The Soviets also insisted that the whole agreement be valid for the next thirty years. This means, of course, the end of any independent Hungarian shipping on the Danube for the duration of that period—or until 1976.

The background for this economic sleight-of-hand deal was prepared by the forward-looking Soviets in August, 1945, with a Soviet-Hungarian barter agreement for exchange of goods and raw materials, negotiated in Moscow. It's said that Hungary's representatives — going beyond the limits of their mission— let themselves be talked into signing a five-year "treaty of economic co-operation." This treaty gave the Russians very important special privileges in the four most important Hungarian industrial and commercial activities—in the production of bauxite and of petroleum, in commercial aviation, and in Danubian shipping.

WHEN the terms of this "treaty of economic co-operation" became known, the Budapest government was rocked into opposing it temporarily. Both the British and American governments protested the treaty. In their protest notes to Moscow they charged that this treaty violated a specific provision of the Crimea Conference. At that time the Big Three had ruled that no economic agreements would be

"Herbie came to school today wearing an Indian suit."

made with Nazi-satellite and enemy states without joint consideration by the Big Three. Nevertheless the British and American protests fell on empty air; in fact, it is stated that no reply was made to them.

Disregarding the western powers' opposition, the Soviets swiftly followed up their August, 1945, coup. They sent a delegation of experts into Hungary to create the machinery for the proposed "economic co-operation." One section of the delegation immediately tackled Danubian navigation, and produced the plan for "fifty-fifty Soviet-Hungarian ownership of MFTR." From beginning to end it has been an instructively smooth operation.

Both in Austria and Hungary the hard-pressed surviving business men and the much deflated (or hog-tied) champions of prewar "free enterprise" are plenty bitter about Soviet economic policies as applied to their countries. Most of these unreconstructed rugged individualists denounce Russia's moves to control and monopolize Danube shipping as an "outright grab." The fact that a majority of these people worked hard and efficiently with the Nazis throughout the war doesn't soften their present indignation in the slightest.

The British and Americans, however, are concerned about more than the future business prospects of Austrian and Hungarian shipping firms.

The Soviet provision for general managers who are Soviet citizens spells very strong Russian economic controls to the Anglo-Americans—and both British and Americans ought to know. In other parts of the world they have known how to use similar economic levers for their own benefit. Anglo-American critics are also highly suspicious of such an innocuous-sounding minor provision as that which would permit non-Hungarian crews on a ship which flies the Hungarian flag. Under that "neat arrangement," as they describe it, the Soviets could run almost every commercial vessel below Vienna with Russian officers and predominantly Russian crews—and yet operate the ships under Hungarian, Yugoslav, or Rumanian flags. Foreign observers could never tell which ships were what.

This prolonged deadlock over the future of Danubian shipping has virtually blocked Europe's greatest waterway and the recovery prospects of a legion of people in central and southeastern Europe. Huge food shipments which would normally be moved up or down the Danube remain at a mere trickle—and the war-hit railroads cannot substitute for the ships. Oil, coal, and other much needed products still cannot be transported in any quantities on the river. The Danube's channels still have not been cleared for larger ships. The river is still sown with mines in many sections. Up to the approach of this winter it was unsafe for night navigation throughout most of its length. Even in Budapest itself—where all seven of the great Danube bridges were senselessly blown up by the Germans—the river channel is blocked to all heavy carriers. Two of Budapest's fallen bridges still block all but a narrow margin of the river.

The Russians asked the western allies for floating cranes and other special equipment to help clear the river of wreckage below Vienna. The Americans agreed to furnish much of the requested material, but they said they must be sure how much was needed and that it would be used for the announced purpose. Consequently they offered to survey the river in Russia's Austrian zone—and then supply the equipment. Soviet authorities refused to permit the survey. So the Americans refused to fill in the blank check. Evidently what is needed is some kind of Soviet-American treaty for mutual "co-operation" along the Danube.

Meanwhile the Soviets have firmly established their mechanisms for control of all Danubian shipping firms south of Vienna. The lower Danube has become, in fact, an incredibly impressive Soviet bargain. With no capital outlay they have

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acquired a very potent political and strategic force.

At the same time the Hungarian MFTR—now Soviet-controlled—also owns important landing stations, wharves, installations, and warehouses way up the river, in Linz and Passau in Austria, and also in Regensburg, only a short distance from Nuremberg in Germany. Regensburg is the top and westernmost railhead on the Danube. In the eyes of British, French, and American authorities the MFTR landing stations at Linz, Passau, and Regensburg could serve as most useful "intelligence bridgeheads" for Moscow if Soviet-controlled ships are to use them under present circumstances and during the next thirty years.

From the west, they would be regarded as strategic forward posts for the Soviets, located well inside the western half of Europe.

This is the tragic, distrustful way the former Big Three allies are thinking.

Take this picture as a whole and its meaning is clear. The battle for the upper Danube is, in reality, a very vital part of the great contest in power politics now being waged grimly between the Soviet Union and the western allies.

So far as the Danube is concerned, the contest appears to be indefinitely deadlocked—perhaps for another costly year, perhaps for even longer. When nature's ice thaws in March, will the political and psychological ice between the western powers and Russia have thawed too?

For millions of war-impoverished people in the Danube basin this is more of a desperate wish than a hope.

But the big-power Danubian log jam at Vienna has got to be dynamited sooner or later. When that happens, the upper Danube will be free—or it will be Red. That, in turn, will have a lot to do with whether Vienna—the traditional front bastion of western Europe—remains oriented to the west, or swings to the powerful new magnet in the east. For the Danube today is a lot more than a great river. It's also a mighty weapon in the big powers' struggle for ideological and strategic entrenchment in central Europe.

THE END

THOUGHTS BEFORE SLEEP

(Written while on a diet)

Ho-hum—today is done;
'Tis six hours since the setting sun,
And 'fore I drift to sleep so sweet,
Ah, let me dream—of things to eat!

—Barbara Rhetta Stabins.

Clothes Clinic
By P. B. Juster
Noted Men's Style Authority

Here's a demonstration of scientific gift buying: This young lady is keeping in mind three of the men on her list: dad, brother, and boy friend. For dad, who usually wears dark clothes, she's picking a bold-pattern tie to give his outfit more life. Her tall brother, who looks best in tweeds, is going to get an ideal choice—a crossbar, three-tone knit tie. For the boy friend, who seems to favor plaids, she knows that a smaller-figured tie will not only blend best but will also be in keeping with his average height. Her shirt selections favor the long-pointed collar for dad and the B.F., and the widespread for brother. It's this little extra care and attention to the details that make a gift welcome.

Christmas Gift Buying Is a Science

THERE'S a right and a wrong way to do everything, and that certainly holds true with Christmas gift buying. Every year thousands of dollars are spent on plain and fancy items that are never worn because wife, sister, sweetheart—even men themselves—failed to give sufficient thought to the likes and dislikes, color preferences, and personality of the person receiving the gift. This year try to select your presents with a little care and they'll be appreciated.

There are scores of gifts you can buy for men this Christmas. Here are just a few. But always keep in mind, even on small items, the importance of their fitting into the man's wardrobe pattern. Leisure jackets, wool shirts, scarves, sweaters, pajamas, slippers, socks, and all the rest always make ideal presents, but more and more men appreciate something a little different, like the toiletry items shown here.

Below: Every man likes to just plain relax at home. This lucky man is wearing a refreshing outfit. The small-patterned foulard robe is in keeping with his large size, and the plain-colored pajamas and dark-tone slippers create a softly blended ensemble. The ascot-styled neckerchief wasn't overlooked to add casualness and comfort.

FLEX-LET

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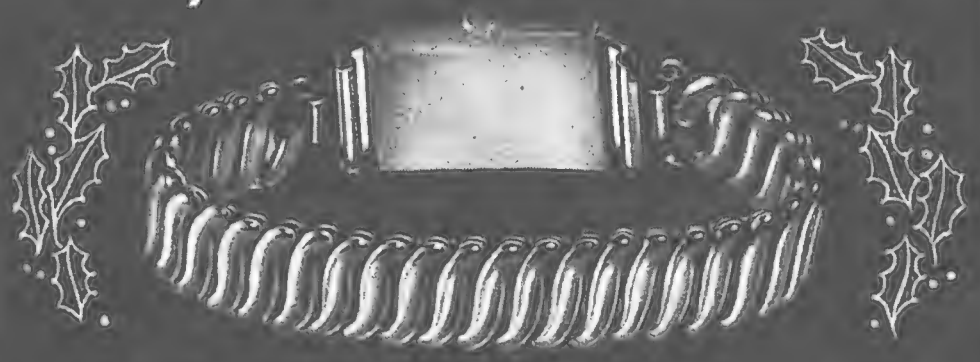

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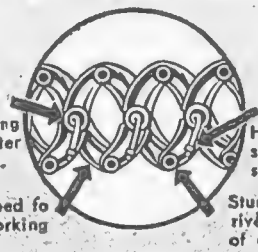
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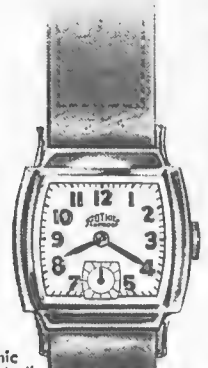

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ALL VELVET

Continued from Page 31

ness and Ed's eagerness to please. His blue eyes sparkled in the October morning air. Jody helped Ed Saturdays and after school hours.

"Hank asks too much, the two-timer." Ed watched as the buzz saw hit a knot. The old Ford motor coughed and wheezed, but the saw ate through.

Jody stopped to watch too. "Dad, why doesn't mama like Hank Tippy?"

"Can't imagine," Ed said. "Unless it's because Hank likes to shoot craps." Ed picked up two cubelike bits of wood the saw had chipped off, held them thoughtfully in his palm, and his hand closed. Ed shook the cubes gently, then let them roll in the sawdust. "Your mama thinks shooting craps is a sin, Jody."

"Is it?" Jody asked.

"Well"— Ed grinned—"it is if you lose." With quick virtue, Ed added, "Don't *you* ever shoot craps, Jody. It just gets you into trouble."

"I won't, dad," Jody solemnly promised.

JODY worked silently for a few minutes, then said, "Dad, if the other schools haven't got their coal, they must be in the same fix."

Ed looked at Jody. "You reckon?"

"There's four schools not ten miles from here."

"What you trying to do, Jody?" Ed asked. "Tie us to this buzz saw for life?"

"You wanted Marge a piano," Jody reminded.

Investigation proved that only one of the schools had already contracted for wood. Ed and Jody got contracts from the other two. They sawed a winter's supply for Miss Plunkett's sister. Ed sold a few truckloads of wood to neighbors, some to be paid for later.

"Wish we could afford to buy this buzz saw, Jody," Ed said, wistfully. "Five bucks a month rent eats in our profit."

They hadn't planned on a private burying fund, but the nearest bank was ten miles away. So they started the Federal Reserve. The Federal Reserve was an old tomato can which they buried near a stump in the woods lot.

"Don't sprinkle *too* much sawdust over, Jody," Ed cautioned. "Your mama has an eye for such things."

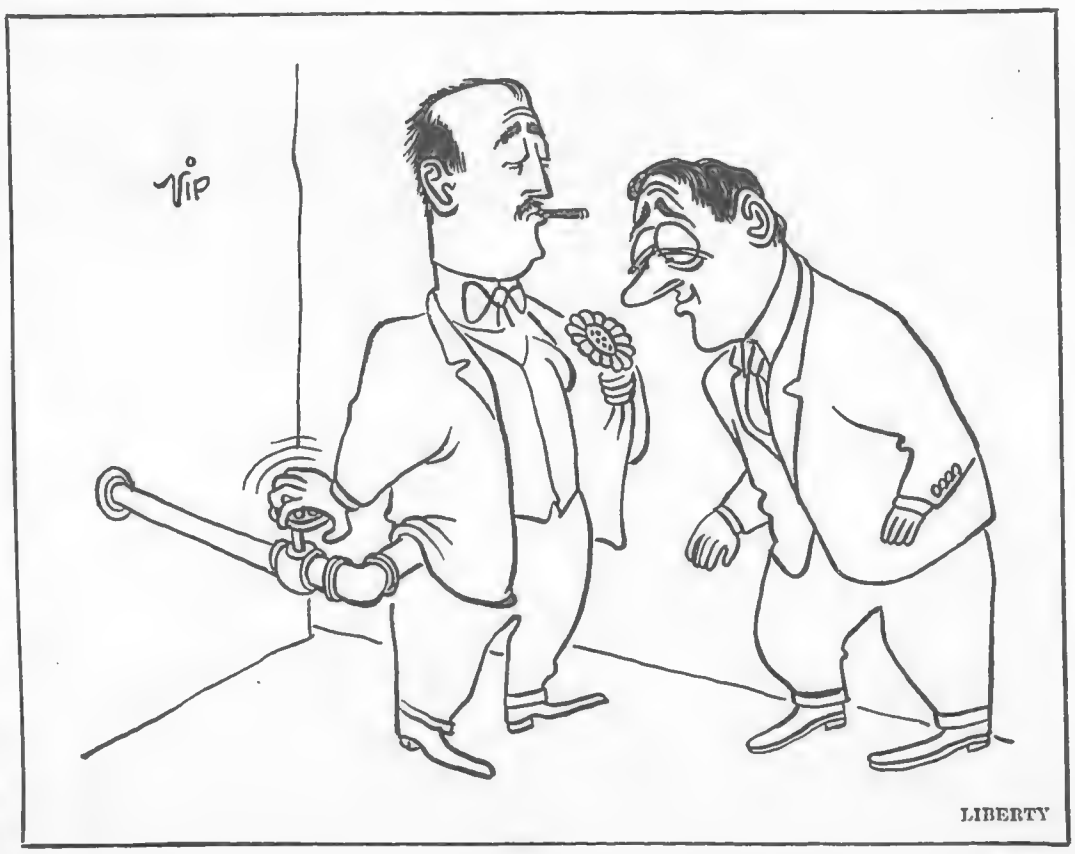
But as the days went past and Eulalie didn't come nosing around too much, Ed guessed maybe Miss Plunkett had been talking to her. Though Ed still hadn't forgotten how Eulalie was when it came to money.

Shortly before Thanksgiving, Ed and Jody counted their cash. "Two of the schools will pay us later," Ed calculated. "Some of the neighbors are a little behind. Weather'll get worse, but we already got over half, Jody. One hundred and two bucks." Ed patted the old can. "It's all velvet."

It was all velvet. But every dollar meant so many blocks of wood. Every block meant so many kinks in the back—ask Jody, who stacked it; so many blisters—ask Ed, who split it; so many chilblains for each of them, working in the early frost together.

"By Christmas, if we're lucky," Ed added, "Marge will be playing on her piano."

"Gee whillikers, dad!" Jody blew warm breath through the hole in his glove where one finger was slightly frostbitten. Jody could see how it would be Christmas morning. Christmas, the house full of good smells, neighbors visiting, everybody talking at once, and Marge just banging the socks off that piano.



Then Ed heard about a piano that was to be sold at auction over Oak Ridge way, Saturday. Ed took the Federal Reserve with him. "I got to pay rent on Hank Tippy's buzz saw anyway," he told Jody. "Want to come along?"

If Jody had gone, things might have been different. But Jody shook his head. "Mama said I had to stay home and split kindling, dad."

Ed came home from the auction that night and said, "It was just an old tin pan." So Jody figured it wasn't much of a piano. Ed acted real quiet. Later, when they went out to the barn to feed the livestock, Ed said, "Jody, I'm the orneriest man in the seventeen states."

Jody could feel little balloons of cold rising inside him. Pretty soon the balloons got bigger and choked him.

Ed took out his empty billfold and said, "Jody, if you want to kick me, I'll bend over."

Jody swallowed, for he could see how Christmas was going to be. Marge would wake up Christmas morning and there wouldn't be any piano. Jody looked straight into his father's eyes and asked, "Did Hank Tippy roll you, dad?"

"Jody," Ed said earnestly, "if I'd 'a' won, the buzz saw would 'a' been ours. But the way it was—"

JODY'S toe kept kicking a hole in the ground, but Jody's eyes couldn't see the hole.

"A hundred and two bucks," Ed said. "And it was all velvet."

Finally Jody's eyes got to where they could see the hole in the ground and another hole—in Jody's shoe. Jody stopped kicking. "I won't tell mama, dad," Jody promised.

Then suddenly Jody thought of something. His hand reached in his pocket and pulled out a ten-dollar bill. "Dad, while you were gone today, Clem Andrews drove by and paid this much on his wood. I gave him a receipt." Jody held it out.

Ed backed away. Ed didn't offer to touch the money. "Keep it, son. You belong to get something out of this deal."

Jody didn't say anything. Jody's eyes were looking toward the junk heap behind the barn. Jody walked over to the junk heap and picked up a rusty can. He dropped the ten-dollar bill in the can and brought it back. "This is velvet, too, dad." Jody offered the can to Ed. "We can start us another Federal Reserve." Jody's eyes looked deep into Ed's.

Ed put his hands behind his back and shook his head. Ed's eyes, as they looked at his son, were pride-ful.

"It's enough for seed, dad," Jody pleaded.

"Jody," Ed said slowly, "did you ever play hide-and-seek?" Jody just looked at Ed. "Well, we're going to play hide-and-seek now," Ed said. "I'll climb up in the hayloft and hide my eyes. Then you hide it. And Jody," Ed said with his hand on the ladder, "for Pete's sake hide it where I can't find it."

Ed climbed up in the hayloft while Jody went and got a garden hoe. After a while Jody came and stood beneath the ladder. "You can come on down now, dad," Jody said.

THEY replenished their Federal Reserve the hard way. The weather got worse. They worked through the cold and the snows. When someone would pay up, Jody would write it down on an old paper bag. "How much we got now, son?" Ed would ask. And Jody would figure it up.

Christmas came and went. Since Marge didn't know about the piano anyway, she could not be disappointed. Because, as Miss Plunkett told Jody, what the eye didn't see the heart didn't feel. Miss Plunkett didn't know what Jody's eyes had seen.

The delivery of Miss Plunkett's baby grand had been delayed. It arrived in late January. Miss Plunkett sent Ed a sealed note from school by Marge. It read:

> If you still want the piano, Ed, you may have it.
>
> MISS PLUNKETT.

Ed made a special trip to see Miss Plunkett. "The way it is, Miss Plunkett," Ed confessed, shamefaced, "I ain't got two hundred dollars."

"I've been talking to Eulalie, Ed," Miss Plunkett surprised him by saying. "Eulalie's worried. She says she's been wanting to believe you're saving for Marge's piano, but time goes by and she doesn't see any money for all this wood you and Jody have been sawing. So she's afraid you're gambling. I told her I could prove you're not. Then she offered to pay half on the piano if you'd pay half. Eulalie told me she didn't believe you *could* save seventy-five dollars."

"Seventy-five!" Ed stared at Miss Plunkett. "But you said two hundred."

"The appraiser thought I was a little high, Ed, so we compromised at a hundred and fifty." Miss Plunkett smiled at Ed's relief.

"Crimnee, I'm rich!" Ed threw his old hat in the air. "Miss Plunkett, you've sold the piano. I'll bring your seventy-five bucks when I come with a truck to haul it." Ed's jaw dropped. "Gee whiz! How much does seventy-five off a hundred and thirty-nine leave?"

"Sixty-four dollars, Ed." Miss Plunkett looked happily surprised.

Ed's face sobered. "Don't let on to Eulalie, Miss Plunkett. If Eulalie caught wind that I had sixty-four bucks left, she'd never rest till she got it buried in her First National."

"The Federal Reserve fund is confidential, Ed," Miss Plunkett reassured him.

That night Ed told Jody he thought maybe there'd be enough left over to buy the buzz saw. Then Ed swore

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Jody to secrecy. "We'll surprise your mama, Jody." Ed grinned. "Eulalie thinks I'm no good. She'll change her mind when she finds out we own our own business."

Next day Ed hauled home the piano. Marge came in from school and found it. Marge didn't quite cry; she was a big girl now, almost ten years old, with a pink ribbon in her dark pigtails, Eulalie's big dark blue shining eyes, and long slim fingers all her own. The fingers caressed the piano—first the wood, then the ivory keys. Marge had played on Miss Plunkett's piano a hundred times. But owning it was different.

"Oh!" Marge said. "Oh, *oh!*" On the last "oh" she climbed up on Ed's lap and kissed Ed's face and neck and ears till Ed got red-faced and hollered, "Calf rope!" Then Marge did it to Eulalie. She tried it on Jody, but Jody ran.

Marge played Old Black Joe first, because that was Ed's favorite. Then she brought out a stack of sheet music and kept it up until bedtime.

Next morning Ed woke up and blamed if Marge wasn't at it again! Ed came into the kitchen grinning, where Eulalie was cooking breakfast. Eulalie looked thin and busy in her starched house dress, but she had a ribbon in her hair and somehow this made it seem like a holiday. Ed kissed the back of Eulalie's neck. Eulalie jumped, and said, "Ed, I'm going to stop her."

"Don't stop her, Eulalie," Ed begged. "When she gets tired enough, she'll stop herself."

ED thought that was the best part, but it wasn't. The best part came when he sat down to breakfast. Ed looked at the newspaper-wrapped bulky thing beside his plate. "What's that, Eulalie?" Ed asked, curious.

Eulalie's eyes burned with a special fondness. "Open it, Ed."

Ed tore the newspaper wrapping off, and blamed if it wasn't that old wallet he'd lost last fall, the one with all the watermelon money in it that Eulalie had found and buried!

"What's the idea of bringing me your first National, Eulalie?" he asked, puzzled.

Eulalie said, "Count it."

Ed's coffee got cold. But there was more coffee. "Two hundred and fifty-five dollars?" Ed asked.

"That's right. The store bill was seventy dollars. And seventy-five for—for that." Eulalie nodded her head in the direction of the actively working piano.

"What do you want me to do with it, Eulalie?"

Eulalie said, "I want you to bank it for us, Ed."

"Bank it?" Ed stared at Eulalie. "Eulalie, have you gone nuts?"

"No, Ed." Eulalie smiled proudly. "Before, I never felt I could trust you. I was afraid you'd shoot craps with it. But anybody who can save seventy-five dollars has got it all over my First National." Eulalie's tone became very serious. "Ed, always, ever since I could add two and two, I've wanted a bank account. Let's see how it'll look with our names on a bankbook. Will you, Ed?"

"That's his silly way of telling me he doesn't see an ash tray around any place."
LIBERTY

Ed looked deep into Eulalie's eyes and said, "If that's the way you want it, Eulalie."

"And Ed," Eulalie continued, "I want to fix it so both of us can sign checks."

"You're sure you want it that way, Eulalie?" Ed asked.

Eulalie said, "I'm sure."

They went to town that day and deposited the money and signed the signature cards. Eulalie kept their bankbook in a glass vase on top of the piano where company would be sure to see it. It read: Ed or Eulalie Ames, Jan. 31st.—$250.00. At the last minute Eulalie had decided to splurge the extra five on yard goods and rickrack for a new dress for Marge.

Ed wisely kept silent about his sixty-four dollars in the Federal Reserve fund. But that same afternoon he met Hank Tippy in the barbershop and offered to buy the buzz saw.

"Looks like you hit me at the right time, Ed," Hank Tippy said. He was a bony man with white eyelashes and a restless manner. "I just had some bad luck in a crap game." Hank looked Ed over, speculative, and said, "How's to roll me for the buzz saw?"

Ed just grinned. "I want to buy it, Hank."

THEY drove a quick bargain and Ed wrote Hank a check for thirty dollars, which Hank immediately cashed.

Going home, Eulalie said uneasily, "Ed, I saw you talking to that Hank Tippy. I hope you ain't having nothing to do with him."

"Now Eulalie," Ed said, "we were talking business."

Ed thought if he deposited thirty dollars the next time he went to town, that would take care of the check business, and what Eulalie didn't know wouldn't hurt her. But Ed wasn't familiar with the manner in which bank records are kept.

ON the second of the month, although certainly they hadn't asked for any such service, Eulalie received the bank statement in the mail. When Ed and Jody came in from sawing wood that night, Eulalie greeted them hopping mad.

"If you ain't been shooting craps again, Ed, maybe you can explain this." Eulalie's hand shook as it held out that check with Hank Tippy's handwriting across the back.

Ed looked pityingly at Eulalie; but Jody spoke: "That's for the buzz saw, mama. Dad bought it. We were aiming to surprise you."

Eulalie's face flushed. Her voice sounded ashamed. "Maybe I'm crazy, Ed. But I guess I've gone and ruined our bank account."

"How could you do that, Eulalie?" Ed asked, patient.

"I got scared and caught a ride into town, and drew it all out again," Eulalie confessed, looking miserable. "I was ashamed to tell the bank man I thought you were gambling. But when they started to pay me, they paid me thirty dollars too much. I was too flustered to notice at first. It shows right here in black and white where they took it off. But now they've gone and added it back on again." Eulalie sighed. "Ed, I'm too dumb to understand bank ways, so I've gone back to my good old First National. I can understand a buried sock."

"Eulalie," Ed said tiredly, "we're right back where we started. The reason they added it on again is because I deposited thirty bucks cash to take care of Hank's check."

"You did?" Eulalie forgot all about being miserable. Her eyes got big and round and very bright, her manner wary. "And where did you get thirty dollars cash?"

"Sawing wood." Ed began to grin slowly. "Different folks." Ed decided women were strange creatures, surely. You'd have thought Eulalie would have been proud to know at last she had a man who could save money, instead of madder'n hops. Ed watched the danger glints gather.

"Ed Ames, do you mean to say you've got money laying around loose that I've never even heard tell of?"

Ed was enjoying himself immensely. "Eulalie, have I ever fussed with you because you have your First National?"

Eulalie's toe began to tap the floor.

Ed's tone became self-righteous. "Then what right have you got to fuss about mine and Jody's Federal Reserve?" Ed looked at Jody and winked. Jody began to slide off his chair and toward the doorway.

"Jody, where you off to?" Eulalie demanded.

"I got to water the calf, mama." Jody turned and ran.

"I'll take care of you later, young man." Eulalie pushed her sleeves up and turned back to Ed. Ed had slipped off his chair onto the floor. When Eulalie kept standing looking down at him, Ed fell over limp, rolling over and over, laughing at Eulalie.

"You—you miser!" Eulalie stamped her foot. "All this time poor Marge and I've been going without—and all that time—"

"Eulalie," Ed said soberly, sitting up, "who started this burying business?"

Eulalie changed her tactics. Eulalie became cheerful, wheedling. "Ed, how *much* have you got?"

Ed stuck his index finger in his ear, turned it, then shook his head as if he had a bug in it. "Eulalie, seems like I'm getting to where I don't hear good," Ed said.

Eulalie threw a basting spoon, but Ed ducked.

"*Where* is it, Ed?" Eulalie put on her cute look.

"Now, Eulalie," Ed said, "all that cute stuff ain't going to get you a thing."

Eulalie turned her back and began dishing up the dinner. Just to show how unconcerned she was, she began to whistle Casey Jones. But the tune was off key, Ed noticed.

Ed got up, stretched casually, then went over and looked as if he were going to kiss Eulalie. Something in her eyes stopped him. "Eulalie, you're working too hard these days," Ed said with mock concern. "You ought to take a rest."

Eulalie slapped at Ed. "Go along with you."

WHISTLING vigorously, Ed went to the barn where Jody was watering the calf. "Maybe we'd better wait till she calls us to dinner, Jody," Ed said with the wisdom of Adam.

He stepped closer, lowering his voice: "Jody, wherever you've got your Federal Reserve buried, you'd better start looking for a safer place."

"She'll never find it, dad," Jody said confidently.

"Don't kid yourself, son. When a woman sets her head to find something that's hid, eighty acres is just too small a place to hide it."

"Well, then"— Jody stroked the calf's ear, thoughtful—"we could start us a sure-enough bank account in town."

"Jody," Ed said, prideful, "you get more like your mama every day."

Jody said, "We could call it the velvet account."

Ed grinned, pleased. "Come to think of it, son"— Ed's voice became a mere whisper—"how much *have* we got left?"

"Enough, dad," Jody said.

"Enough for what?"

Jody just grinned. "Enough for seed."

THE END

Pick of THE PICTURES

BY
VIRGINIA SPIES

Chock-full of nostalgic songs and starring dewy-eyed Jeanne Crain, this captivating comedy is set in the famous Charleston-and-coonskin-coat period.

Margie

HERE'S a merry, endearing glance at the high-school days of the late 1920s—that frantic world of flappers, flagpole sitters, coonskin coats, and the Charleston.

A sweet, refreshing comedy of young love, it's embellished with nostalgic, Technicolored trimmings of small-town Americana, vintage 1928. Also running through the film are the tinny but pleasantly familiar jazz songs of that era.

Margie (Jeanne Crain) is the ace debater of Central High but would gladly trade in her brains for beaus. While the vamp next door (film freshman Barbara Lawrence) snares the slick captain of the football team (young Broadwayite Conrad Janis) by featuring the lowest-rolled stockings and most heavily rouged knees in town, Margie can only attract Roy (radio comedian Alan Young), a meek little grind with adenoids and an enormous Adam's apple.

The woes of this prohibition-style Junior Miss pile up. The handsome new French teacher (Glenn Langan), who is virtually a Senior Project for all the girls, has an embarrassing habit of running into Margie when her bloomers are falling down. And she has to go to the Prom, of all places, with her father, a mousy mortician. But at the dance Margie, still glowing from a Technicolored bubble bath, substitutes brilliantine for brilliance and has her pick of both the football captain and the French instructor.

Such teen-age trivia has become charming and fresh under Henry King's genial directing. And F. Hugh Herbert, who proved himself an amusing chronicler of adolescence with his own Kiss and Tell, has done well with the screen adaptation of the Ruth McKenney-Richard Bransten Margie stories.

This team, with an assist from the Twentieth Century-Fox wardrobe department, which went all out in reproducing the short-skirted, long-waisted fashions of the period, comes up with a succession of scenes that seem to have been torn straight out of a high-school yearbook. There's the solemn debate on whether the Marines should be recalled from Nicaragua; ice skating at the local rink; and Charleston sessions in school corridors.

Jeanne Crain's dewy-eyed, wistful performance, along with the acting of a flock of talented newcomers, makes Margie a must.

Female scholars such as Margie (Jeanne Crain) and flappers, too, turn out in droves when handsome Glenn Langan starts teaching French.

After luxuriating in the first bubble bath to appear in Technicolor on the screen, Margie gets ready for the great event —the Senior Prom.

Personifying flaming youth, pert Barbara Lawrence snares the boys by rouging her knees and wearing the lowest-rolled stockings on the campus.

OTHER PICTURES WORTH SEEING

THE STRANGE WOMAN (United Artists). Ben Ames Williams' popular novel has been adapted into a costume piece, starring Hedy Lamarr and George Sanders.

DECEPTION (Warner Bros.). Bette Davis and Claude Rains vie for acting honors in an engrossing backstage drama of musical artists.

THE DARK MIRROR (International). This is an absorbing, supercharged thriller with Olivia De Havilland excelling at playing twins.

TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST (Paramount). Alan Ladd and Brian Donlevy are part of the crew in this tough and tangy version of a great sea classic.

ANGEL ON MY SHOULDER (United Artists). Here is a wonderful fantasy that features slick performances by Paul Muni, Claude Rains, and Anne Baxter.

THE JOLSON STORY (Columbia). A schmaltzy, spirited, and unforgettable tribute to one of our greatest entertainers, with Larry Parks playing Jolson.

SISTER KENNY (RKO). An excellent film biography of the Australian nurse in which Rosalind Russell gives a performance of Academy Award caliber.

THE KILLERS (Universal). Producer Mark Hellinger has expanded the famous Ernest Hemingway short story into one of the year's most exciting films.

BLUE SKIES (Paramount). A top-notch musical, with Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire, and Joan Caulfield doing justice to twenty-eight tunes by Irving Berlin.

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★ ★ ★

To make hearts go pitter-patterer, June Allyson sings "Cleo-patterer".

★ ★ ★

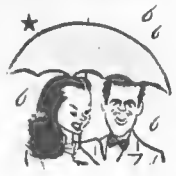
Lucille Bremer pleads lyrically for "One More Dance" and Van Johnson replies, "I Won't Dance"—but he does, and how!

★ ★ ★

Then there's Judy Garland as Marilyn Miller, singing the haunting "Who?".

★ ★ ★

Kathryn Grayson and Tony Martin are the melodic romancers of "Showboat".



★ ★ ★

Torchy Lena Horne sings "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man". Angela Lansbury "swings" a tune.

★ ★ ★

Virginia O'Brien scores with "A Fine Romance". Dinah Shore stops the show with "The Last Time I Saw Paris".

★ ★ ★

Frank Sinatra provides a spectacular musical climax with "Ol' Man River"

★ ★ ★

All this as you thrill to the colorful events in the life of Jerome Kern who is portrayed by Robert Walker.

★ ★ ★

As Kern's arranger and best friend, Van Heflin returns to the screen in triumph.

★ ★ ★

Director Richard Whorf and Producer Arthur Freed, with screenwriters Myles Connolly and Jean Holloway, have woven story and song and splendor miraculously together.

★ ★ ★

Yes, just wait "Till The Clouds Roll By". It's pure sunshine!

—*Leo*

FORTY WORDS

Continued from Page 13

minutes to read the four clippings three times through. Up to then he had assumed that murders were headline stuff. This one wasn't.

The oldest clipping was dated thirteen months ago. It said briefly that Edward Jarvis, aged twenty-six, was removed to Longview Hospital, suffering from a bullet wound in the chest. He died soon after admission. Robert Alding was being detained.

The next stated in one paragraph that Robert Alding was indicted for murder in the first degree as a result of the fatal shooting, in an altercation over a gambling debt, of Edward Jarvis, at the latter's home. The defending attorney was Rodney Gilbert; Halbert Hurd the prosecuting attorney.

The third was two paragraphs: A jury of eleven men and one woman was selected to try Robert Alding for the murder of Edward Jarvis. Assistant District Attorney Halbert Hurd said he would seek the death penalty. The defense, handled by Rodney Gilbert, indicated it would plead temporary insanity.

The fourth was one paragraph: Robert Alding was convicted of murder in the first degree in the shooting of Edward Harvis (undoubtedly a typographical error), which verdict carried a mandatory penalty of execution. Alding showed no emotion.

That was all, just those four clippings.

Robertson knew now that he hadn't been chosen to cover this assignment because of his ability. O.K. He'd show 'em. He'd find out the inner story of this murder and would incorporate it in his execution yarn, and when Lewis bent his leonine head toward him and said, "Good job of reporting, son"—when that happened, he'd say, casually, "Oh, just so-so."

HE started by telephoning Rodney Gilbert, who had handled the defense. Mr. Gilbert, a party wheel horse, exuded practiced affability; but he had never even seen Alding—he'd turned the case over to an assistant, who was on vacation.

Halbert Hurd, the assistant district attorney, was next. He told Robertson to come right over; of course he'd be glad to tell him all about the case. He remembered it well. What he remembered was the brilliant eloquence with which Halbert Hurd, newsboy who rose to be racket buster, had wrested a conviction from an admiring jury in the teeth of the clever but chagrined defense. Alding—oh, a petty gambler most probably. One of those mousy little squirts nobody would remember.

Robertson got away eventually.

He went up to West Sixty-eighth Street, to the home of the late Edward Jarvis. The janitor, a Mr. Otto Van der Wolf III, remembered Jarvis. A gentleman, sir. Very quiet. Lived alone in the three rooms just overhead—living room, bedroom, and kitchen. Now, about Mr. Van der Wolf III. In the Battle of the Somme he had, to be modest, distinguished himself by . . .

Robertson escaped from there, with his folded sheaf of copy paper still blank. He went south twenty blocks to the brownstone roominghouse where Robert Alding had lived. A spry old woman with white hair and a little lace bonnet on it answered his ring and inquiry.

"Never lived here," she said petulantly. "This is a respectable house, young man."

"Perhaps, ma'am, it was before your time, but—he lived here eight months—or was it eighteen? I forget which."

"Hardly three months," she said shortly. "And I'm sorry I let him in. I should have suspected that wife of his—she had such high heels, and nylons, when nobody had nylons, except them that patronized the black market. He—"

"Had a wife, did he?" said Robertson, stumbling over himself with eagerness.

The landlady tightened her old face.

"Who said he had a wife, young man?"

"You mentioned it."

"You're crazy. He didn't even live here. I don't know him. Never heard of him. This is a respectable house! And if you mention this address, I'll sue your paper for libel!"

Robertson argued, begged. In the end, he went away defeated.

At ten o'clock the next morning he was standing on the wide concrete prison steps, drawing still another blank from the friendly young turnkey.

He was by now so used to drawing blanks that when the girl walked up the steep road from the station, he noticed only that she wore a fine skunk coat. To the young turnkey she said, "I'd like to see Mr. Alding, please."

"Your name, please?"

"Mrs. Alding. Mrs. Robert Alding."

"Just a minute."

The turnkey disappeared into the dim recesses. This was Robertson's chance. He walked over to her. "I'm Robertson, from the Star. I'd like to talk to you about your husband. I—"

She froze him with a stare, turned a furred shoulder to him.

Robertson retreated a little and waited.

AFTER a long while the turnkey returned.

"Sorry," he said. "Your name isn't on the list of visitors he wishes to see."

"I'm his wife!" she protested.

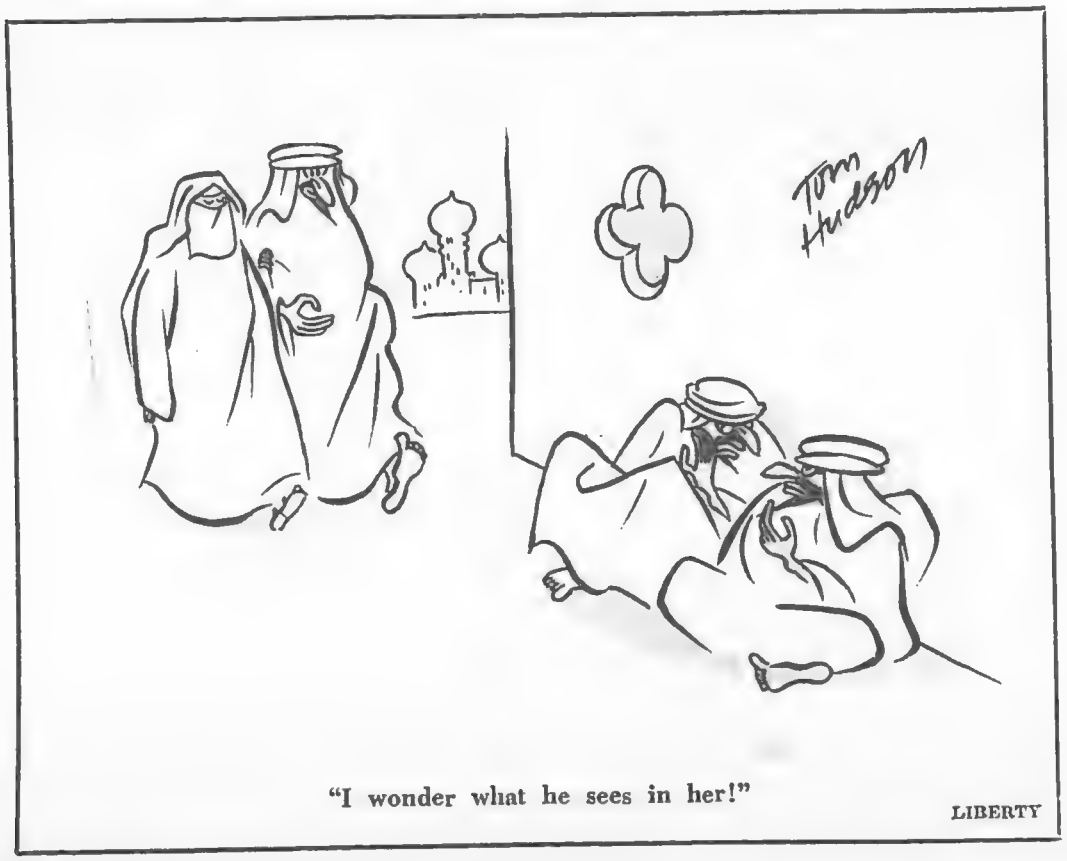
"Your name," the turnkey repeated patiently, "isn't on the list of visitors he wishes to see. You see, that's their perog — perogative, ma'am." He looked triumphant at having successfully hurdled the four-syllable word. "That means when they came into the death house, they make out a list of who they want to see, an' only those people are admitted to see them."

"I'd like to see the warden then, please."

Robertson half choked at that. Seeing Harry Sinclair, the great warden of this great prison, was almost—but not quite—as hard as seeing the President of the United States.

The turnkey said, "The warden isn't in right now, ma'am. Care to leave a message?"

She stood irresolutely for a moment or two, tapping a trim angry toe.



"I wonder what he sees in her!"

LIBERTY

LIBERTY

"Never mind, then," she said to the guard. She turned and started down the winding hill road. Robertson followed her. There wasn't a chance in the world that she'd talk to him, but what had he to lose?

"Mrs. Alding!" he called.

She stopped short and turned. She had, he noticed now, beautiful full red lips and distrustful gray eyes. "Can you get in to see my husband?" she demanded.

"Me? I— Sure I can!" He dug out his police card. "See," he said, "where it says 'Admit bearer through all police and fire lines.'"

She was impressed.

"I'd like to talk to you. I'd like to send a message—but in strict confidence."

Robertson said, "I understand." The Old Homestead Bar & Grill was just across the street, a fantastic name, considering it was just a hundred yards or so from the prison. "We could talk in there, Mrs. Alding. You look like you need a drink —to fortify yourself."

SHE drank a whisky, neat; ordered another, and when it was before her she said, "You must be a mind reader, M.— What did you say your name was "

"Robertson, ma'am."

"Not one of the Robertsons of Fairfield County!"

"No, ma'am. I'm from the city."

She sighed. "The Robertsons of Fairfield—now, I could trust them implicitly. My grandmother was descended on the paternal side from the Robertsons of Fairfield. She was a Smythe from— But that wouldn't interest you, Mr. Robertson, would it?"

Robertson just stopped himself from saying it wouldn't.

"This message—" he suggested.

She said, "Oh, yes. You see, the reason I came up today was to show Bob that I forgave him—absolutely and completely. Even though he made a mess of my life, Mr. Robertson, I felt I owed it to him as a wife."

"I see," said Robertson, who didn't.

She drank the whisky, and a small gesture of the furred shoulder brought the bartender over to refill her glass. "What I mean," she said, "is that I *understand.* Tell him that, Mr. Robertson.

"You see," she went on, lifting her third drink (That would be one-eighty, Robertson figured quickly, and wondered if he could get away with it on his expense account), "it isn't as though he was one of us.

"What I mean is," she added quickly and a little thickly, "whoever heard of the Aldings? Nobody! But I married him, because I was a foolish, patriotic girl. Why, he didn't even have a commission! He was just a sergeant. Did I care, and me a —I won't tell you my name because, even if you aren't one of the Fairfield Robertsons, you'd recognize it.

"Oh, I know now I was just a foolish, headstrong girl. I married him even though my father said I was foolish. Even though my mother cried, I married him. I'm like that, Mr. Robertson—headstrong."

SHE'D finished her third drink, and the gesture brought the bartender again to refill her glass.

"They were right, of course. *I* was wrong. I admit it freely, Mr. Robertson. In a week I knew they were right and I was wrong. But I'd made my bargain and I stuck to it. I can't tell you how awful it was. He was *so* coarse, *so* common. His syntax was—a crime, that's all I can say about it."

"It must have been hard on you," Robertson murmured.

"Hard? Brutal!" She took another swallow, the last in the glass. A slight shrug brought the bartender. "Aren't you having one, Mr. Robertson?"

Robertson explained that he had a long afternoon and night of work ahead of him. "But go on," he said. "I see what a cruel proposition you were up against."

"Cruel? It was unbearable! Unbearable! Nevertheless I held out. For three dreadful, horrible weeks I held out—until he went overseas. By that time I was a crushed wreck, Mr. Robertson, a crushed wreck. I went back to my parents, and my poor mother cried when she saw me —I was in such a condition. Even father, who is ordinarily unsympathetic, said I needn't ever go back to him if I didn't want to."

Robertson felt rather desperate. The bar bill was a good three dollars now. Frank, the auditor, would never let that go by.

"There was," he said, "some mention of an altercation over a gambling debt."

Mrs. Alding laughed, a short hard laugh. "That's rich," she said thickly. "Rich. A gambling debt! Bob wouldn't bet a penny on the Ken-

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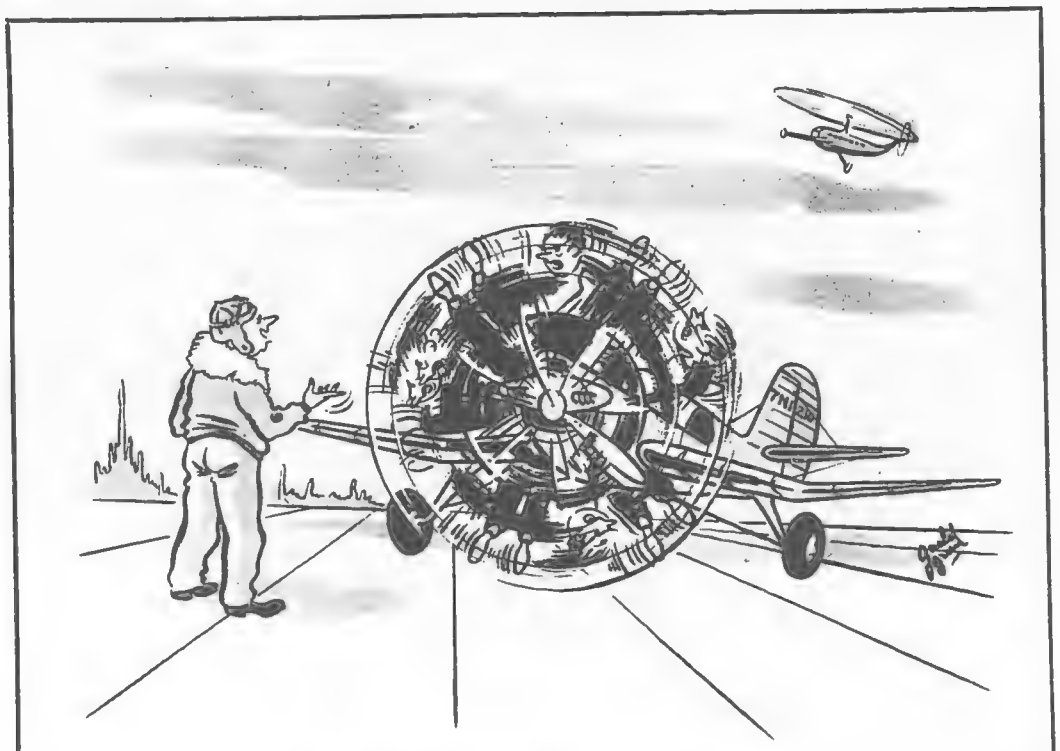

"No, Mr. Roberts! Once it starts, let go."

LIBERTY

tucky Derby. He was proud of the fact that he didn't smoke, drink, or gamble. Can you imagine anything more utterly provincial, Mr. Robertson?"

Robertson, who smoked, drank, and played the races, said, "No, I can't, Mrs. Alding."

"You see, Mr. Robertson, after Bob went overseas, I ran into Ed and—it was one of those utter tragedies. I'd always admired him, but I never thought he so much as noticed me. It turned out that even in high school he'd been in love with me. When I said I was sorry he hadn't mentioned it years before, or even months before, it turned out that it was because he'd been too shy. Imagine that! And he'd been so sought after!

"Of course, all this was platonic—purely, I assure you. Besides, he was a gentleman, Edward Jarvis was. He was connected with the Williamses of Lowery County. I'm sure you know what that means, Mr. Robertson."

"I sure do!" said the mendacious Robertson.

"We were of a class, Mr. Robertson—of the same class. We liked the same things, the civilized way of living. He knew I was married. I knew he was divorced, but there is no disgrace in that. I meant to be divorced myself; I'd wait a reasonable period, and then be married to Ed. It would be civilized and honest. We were both honest, Ed and I.

"The trouble was, Ed was too honest, too decent, too civilized. When Bob came home, he didn't have the heart to tell him, or even let me tell him. He said, 'After all he's been through, it wouldn't be fair to throw a divorce in his face.'

"It wasn't as though Ed hadn't done his share in the war; he'd worked tremendously hard, forever going to Washington, summer and winter—and you know what Washington's like in the summer, Mr. Robertson. Frightful!

"He said, 'No, dear, I feel guilty as hell — after what he's been through.' Ed was forever thinking of other people."

SHE sipped her drink. "There was nothing, absolutely nothing, wrong between us, Mr. Robertson. You understand that?"

"Of course!"

"So I went back to Bob when he came home. Ed told me he'd never, never stop loving me, no matter what happened.

"I went back to live with Bob in the city. In a horrible roominghouse which was never really clean. All of this I might have borne if Bob hadn't been so oblivious. He didn't notice the sheets were gray; any food suited him, so long as there was plenty of it. Evenings he was perfectly satisfied with a movie. He had a miserable little job and he kept talking of where it would lead to in five or ten years. Five or ten years!

"I couldn't bear it. I wrote to Ed, saying that he had to come and get me, or I'd go to him. The next I knew he was in the city, telling me, urging me, to give it a try. A try! I'd tried it for weeks, and it wouldn't work. The only relief was going up to Ed's apartment for a few minutes occasionally, to talk to him, to relax with someone who was really of my type. Not that there was anything wrong, Mr. Robertson."

"Of course not. I understand."

"But Bob didn't. He was so utterly, sickeningly provincial. I'll never forget that evening he walked in on us. He looked a mess, in a ready-made suit. He was so utterly provincial that he must have trailed me to Ed's place — as though there was anything wrong!

"He just walked in without ringing. He glowered—just glowered—at Ed, who was merely sitting there, just talking to me. He said something about 'Wolves' and pulled a pistol from his pocket—a queer-looking one he'd brought back from Germany.

"Ed got up and was very polite. He tried to coax Bob to put the gun down for a moment, so they could talk like human beings. But Bob wouldn't. The next thing I knew there was a flash from the gun—a terrible flash, and poor Ed was on the floor. He was out of his mind. He kept saying, deliriously, 'I'm sorry, Bob, I'm sorry. It wasn't worth the candle. I'm sorry, Bob.' That's what he kept saying. And Bob—he was out of his mind too—kept saying, 'You're telling me, Ed! I'm sorry.' He knelt beside Ed and tried to help him—the blood ran all over his hands. He kept saying, 'I'm a fool! I'm a fool! Forgive me, Ed!'"

She sucked the dregs of her glass. She said, "I'll never forget—being a sensitive person — poor Ed lying there on the floor with the blood pumping out of his chest, saying, 'Get her out of here, Bob. And remember—it's an altercation we had — over — over — a gambling debt. Got to'—that's what he said—'got to protect her, Bob.'"

The bartender came back and refilled her glass.

"And then—" said Robertson.

"I went to see him in jail. I told him that all he had to do was to make it clear he was a World War veteran and he'd get off with a year or two. But no, he just said I was to keep my mouth shut, and he and Ed would fix things up. He was delirious, of course. After all, Ed had been dead for months past."

Robertson was suddenly impatient with Mrs. Robert Alding. "Had enough?" he inquired. "Then let's go."

ON the way to the station she walked a little unsteadily. She said it was amazing that there was practically nothing about it in the papers. As to Bob that was understandable—the Aldings were nobodies. But Edward Jarvis was connected with the Williamses of Lowery County and was important. But there was nothing in the newspapers, except what Russia was doing at the U. N. O. meeting.

It was growing dark when he climbed the hill again. The friendly young turnkey had been replaced by an older man.

At nine fifteen he was surrounded by a lively chattering group. At nine twenty he was in the warden's office, and the warden's press agent was saying, "This is Deputy Sheriff Tompkins, and I would appreciate it if you would mention his name."

Robertson had a wild idea of running all this as a social note. "Among those present," he'd write, "were . . ."

There were seven or eight other

reporters from upstate papers, all looking very casual.

He hid his secret from them. He knew the inside story; they didn't. Every so often one of the casual men would ask, "Who is this Alding anyway? Stick-up man?" Or "Sex killer?" And "Our morgue didn't have any clips on him."

At nine forty-five the warden appeared, superbly barbered, and sat behind a glittering glass-topped mahogany desk. A turnkey called briskly that weapons and liquor were not allowed, and all having same would please surrender them now at the warden's desk, and they would be returned upon leaving. Also any and all cameras were to be surrendered now. The turnkey paused. Nobody surrendered a weapon, a bottle of liquor, or a camera. Robertson could hear sounds of deep breathing around him.

"All right, then, please go through the left door," the turnkey said. They went through the left door, stumbled down a staircase to a paved court, where three motor vans were waiting, and were rushed through dark narrow alleys and discharged onto a concrete step. A guard searched them, but carelessly: as each alighted, a hand was run briskly up and down each arm, up and down each leg. That had been the custom, one of the reporters explained, ever since the Illustrated Press sneaked a man in with a camera fastened to his instep. It was a swell picture, too; worth being barred from the death room for a year or two.

THEY were shown into a neat white-walled chamber, a little like a small intimate church, with its ten rows of golden-oak pews facing a large golden-oak chair set on a little dais, with leather straps dangling from the arms and headrest.

Robertson sat down, in the yellow light, in the first pew, and two men immediately sat beside him. He felt their shoulders against his. He sat through an unspeakably long age, and quite suddenly he felt sweat streaming down his face; he felt his stomach rise and fall; he felt the man on his right hold his arm and say, "Getting a bit green, son. You can't get out now, but you can close your eyes and I'll tell you later what happens."

He wasn't *that* sick, Robertson told himself. But he thanked the man on his right politely, explaining, "It's the waiting that gets me."

"I know," said the man on his right. "The waiting is hell. Often we have as many as three minutes of it —the chap who's coming through that door has had a year or more of it. There ought to be a law."

Robertson nodded. It had long passed three minutes, he knew; there must be some delay. It was fifteen or twenty minutes he'd sat there, and it seemed like a year. What a time this Robert Alding had had! Thirteen months of this! Did he sweat all the time? Did his shirt stick to him clammily? Did the soles of his feet feel like ice?

The door on the right wasn't a "little green door," as he'd read somewhere. It was golden oak, like the pews, like the chair itself. There was a tall lean man with white hair and a face the color of golden oak—jaundice?—patiently kneading some apparatus in a bucket of salt water just to the left of the chair. It must be salt water; that was what he had heard; and the apparatus must be the electrodes. He looked like a nice, patient man, maybe with a touch of jaundice.

THE chair—make a note of this, Robertson; it would swallow up some minutes—was set on a square mat of rubber. The light grew yellower, thicker somehow. You could hear people panting around you.

Three minutes? It must have been an hour since the guard ran a quick exploring hand up and down his arms and legs. And for thirteen months a fellow had sat, just outside the door, waiting, as Robertson was waiting, only more poignantly, since he was going to sit in that golden-oak chair, and knew it all along, and must have been wondering for thirteen months how the burn of twenty-two hundred volts felt. And Robertson was only going to write a story about it. It would be a good story, perhaps a great story, about a man, one Robert Alding, who went through all this, multiplied by whatever three minutes went into thirteen months—he'd figure that out later—because there was a girl with red lips and shoulders that wore skunk superbly, and trim nylon legs. He hadn't worked out the details yet. But now, sitting in the golden-oak pew, with the man on his right holding his arm, he fretted, happily, about those things. Three minutes into thirteen months—what was that? But that was silly. Why divide three minutes into thirteen months? They should be multiplied, or added, or subtracted. He worried about it, because it was nice to worry about those things; it lifted your mind away from the golden-oak chair, from the lean oaken-faced man kneading electrodes in a bucket of salt water.

He was busy trying to divide three minutes into one hour, and multiply that by twenty-four, and multiply the result by thirty, and multiply thirty by thirteen, and despairing—but happily—because not all months had thirty days—he was busy doing that when the golden-oak door on the right opened, and a man walked in. The left leg of his blue trousers was slit to the knee and flapping awkwardly. He had dark eyes, which flashed swiftly, row by row, over the witnesses, as though looking for something and not finding it. (What, Robertson thought angrily, did he expect to find—his wife?) He had thinning black hair, and a stiff look to his shoulders, as though he'd

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been holding them upright too long.

He had two turnkeys just behind him. One pushed him gently, and Robert Alding moved quietly, almost happily, it seemed, to the oaken chair with the dangling thongs. The guards certainly knew their business. In a moment the straps were tight around his arms and legs. In that same moment the yellow-faced executioner lifted his dripping brine-soaked electrodes from their bucket, and clamped one—it looked like a too-big football helmet—onto a head with thinning black hair; another onto a pallid leg revealed by slit blue trousers.

There must have been a signal, but Robertson didn't see it. All he saw was the guards stepping back quickly from the black rubber mat, the executioner stepping back into his little cubicle and reaching for a lever. Somewhere a motor whimpered, whined high, and went dead, while the body in the chair lifted, strained against the straps, and fell back; the motor whimpered, whined high, went dead, the body lifted, strained, fell back. A paunchy man with a stethoscope stepped forward, applied the stethoscope to the sunken chest, said, "I pronounce this man dead."

There was a rush out of the death house. The smell was growing bad. Robertson wouldn't have made the second van except that the man who'd been holding his right arm said, "This fellow's sick." Then they got him into the second van and were very solicitous. The driver said was he going too fast? A fellow rider stopped retching to say these things always get you the first time, but cheer up—next time you'll be a veteran; next time you'll learn to close your eyes. And who was this fellow anyway, this Robert Alding?

ROBERTSON called his night city desk. He got Nowell presently, the night M. E. He told Nowell that he had a superduper of a yarn—he'd had an interview with the wife of the condemned man, Robert Alding.

"Who?" shouted Nowell. "Who?"

"Robert Alding. Supposed to have killed a fellow in an altercation over a gambling debt. But I—"

"Forty words, no more."

"I couldn't possibly—"

"Forty words!" howled Nowell. "Don't you know there's a big strike on? Might paralyze the country!"

"But—" The receiver banged in his ear.

Robertson went to the Western Union office. He borrowed a typewriter and pecked out slowly: "Robert Alding, 31, was executed here tonight for the murder of Edward Jarvis, aged 26, in the latter's apartment on 68th St. Alding had been convicted of first degree murder—"

He stopped and counted the words.

"—in the killing," he typed, "during an altercation over a gambling debt."

It came out to just forty words:

THE END

THE THROPP
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$ 7,000! A FORTUNE, JUST FOR LETTING MR. BARKER MAKE YOUR DOG FORMULA!
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WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE OLD MAN, OZ?
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HOLD EVERYTHING! THE OLD BUZZARD IS BACK!
$ 50,000 OR NOTHING, MR. BARKER!
WHY, YOU LITTLE WHIPPER---
MR. BARKER! WATCH YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE!
WATER! WATER!
HERE, SIR DRINK THIS!
HOLD IT, CAL! THAT'S THE FORMULA!

FAMILY

Written by **LAWRENCE LARIAR**
Illustrated by **DON LOU**

WHEW! I FEEL FAINT! YOUR SON WEARS AN OLD MAN OUT!
RELAX A BIT LUCY AND I MAY GET AN ANGLE!
I'VE GOT IT! CALDECOTT MIGHT CHANGE OZZIE'S MIND!
IT'S WORTH A TRY!
LET ME REST A BIT. I'LL NEED ALL MY STRENGTH!
LISTEN TO REASON, CAL! MR. BARKER OFFERS $ 7,000! ISN'T THAT ENOUGH?
O.K. IF OZZIE SAYS SO!
NEVER! THE OFFER'S RIDICULOUS!
I'LL MAKE IT $10,000, BUT NOT A CENT MORE!
TOO LATE OZZIE! HE'S DRINKING IT!
GREAT GUNS! THAT STUFF MIGHT BE POISION!

Continued next week

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She's as Lively as a Youngster—Now her Backache is better

Many sufferers relieve nagging backache quickly, once they discover that the real cause of their trouble may be tired kidneys.

The kidneys are Nature's chief way of taking the excess acids and waste out of the blood. They help most people pass about 3 pints a day.

When disorder of kidney function permits poisonous matter to remain in your blood, it may cause nagging backache, rheumatic pains, leg pains, loss of pep and energy, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes, headaches and dizziness. Frequent or scanty passages with smarting and burning sometimes shows there is something wrong with your kidneys or bladder.

Don't wait! Ask your druggist for Doan's Pills, a stimulant diuretic, used successfully by millions for over 40 years. Doan's give happy relief and will help the 15 miles of kidney tubes flush out poisonous waste from your blood. Get Doan's Pills.

EUROPE WITHOUT TEARS

Continued from Page 21

Queen or a Duck Savage, I called for the maître d'hôtel and explained my plight. I ventured to ask him about the fifty-four-franc menu posted outside. His look showed me that I was making history in the Taverne Royale. There was amazement and amusement, but tender compassion too. Then honest humor broke through and stole his whole expression. This was indeed *drôle.* What a pity! He had been on the point of recommending a lobster dish that— But yes, about the little menu at fifty-four francs. He believed the matter could perhaps arrange itself.

I ate at the Taverne Royale on two slabs of tongue floating in a marvelous sauce, and *pommes nature,* followed by a morsel of cheese. I ate for fifty-four francs, and this, I suppose, has not been done by anyone else. The wines of the Taverne's celebrated cave were listed at 250 to 500 francs a bottle, but I drank beer for six francs. Tipping literally all I could, I emerged with no francs and no centimes. But by 2.05 I again had the warm feeling of having money in my pocket.

IT should be said for those who, like myself, think ten dollars too much to pay for any dish, that one may have a good, generously portioned table d'hôte meal for two or three dollars in many establishments, and this includes the extra which the foreign visitors have to pay for the lack of ration tickets. One is constantly amazed at such a phenomenon in "starving Europe." How does Belgium do it? I have asked many Belgians this question and their answers are as varied as themselves. "We have more drive, more will to live well," says the super-patriot. "We're a farming and a cattle-raising country," says another. "It's Antwerp," says the Antwerper; "with the greatest port in Europe located in the heart of our country, it is easy to bring in food from everywhere."

My own answer is that Belgium recovers well because she is used to having to recover after invasion. She has been doing it for centuries. And it is not only in the matter of food that one sees this recovery. One sees it in the reconstructed cities, towns, and villages. The damage all along Belgium's "fortress coast" was appalling. The scars of the "Runstedt Bulge" are tragic in the Ardennes. The buzz-bombing of Antwerp was a special and frightful wound. Yet all the wounds are healing under the methodical endeavors of a nation used to recovering. Antwerp seems—relatively speaking—as good as ever, and the Ardennes villages are, in many cases, fairly leaping back to their former estate. Florenville, for instance, looked to me almost untouched by war and I said so to a resident. "Untouched, monsieur? One hundred and seventy-five houses were destroyed. We have rebuilt a hundred and twenty-five of them so far."

"It's not the penny—it's the principle of the thing!"

LIBERTY

The traveler's Belgium is a treasure chest whose contents are hardly equaled in variety by those found in any area of similar size in Europe, and once one has entered it and "learned a few ropes" the annoyance factor shrinks almost to nothing. One cannot buy or borrow or steal a railway timetable (one must plan each trip by means of the train schedules posted in the stations), and getting good hotel accommodations is by no means easy. But the prudent traveler who plans to arrive in a new town fairly early in the day can check his bags and go out —successfully—on the room hunt.

First there is Brussels itself, a city of many-sided appeal. The only present means of transportation is a network of very antiquated trams, but distances are not great and one may pleasantly depend on footwork. My own postwar footwork led me first to the Flea Market on the Street of the Radishes (Rue des Radis). It takes a lot of finding, but the goal is worth the effort. On any morning the bedlam here matches that of London's Petticoat Lane. Hundreds of marketeers bellow their wares, which include precious soap and American cigarettes, the latter at fifty francs ($1.18) a pack. There were plenty of brokers here eager to give me sixty-five francs to the dollar instead of the legal forty-three. But they wanted cash, not traveler's checks. Three harmless train conductors, in uniform, entered from the far side while I was there, and the street mistook them for police stooges. It was wonderful to watch the mass reaction. An old crone with whom I was dickering for a package of cigarettes tossed her whole stock, two or three cartons, through a cellar window, produced from her ample bodice a supply of Belgian sleeve bands and suspenders and began lustily shouting their merits. A vendor across the street hastily hid his cigarettes beneath some carrots in a pocket of his vast apron and began selling shoe polish. But the train conductors smiled reassuringly and the street's normal activities were quickly resumed.

Conventional sight-seeing always centers, and should center, in the Grand' Place, or in Flemish, the Groote Markt (every sign and public announcement in biracial Belgium is bilingual). I think the Grand' Place is the finest, most beautiful, most authentically romantic medieval square in Europe, and it is a mercy to the world that the war completely spared it. Surrounded by glorious old guild houses, by the ornate Maison du Roi and the elaborate old Hôtel de Ville, there is not a false note about the ensemble; and the presiding patron of the scene is the city's beloved St. Michael, a fourteen-ton, sixteen-foot gilded giant who swings to the wind as a weathervane 364 feet above the pavement, topping the graceful spire of the Hôtel de Ville.

THE world-famous Manneken-Pis fountains day and night from a street corner near the Grand' Place. He is Brussels' "oldest citizen," though a child of about three years. The story is that the boy, son of a prominent seventeenth-century Bruxellois, once wandered away and was lost. The distressed father promised that if the boy was found, he would offer to the city a bronze statue of the child made in his exact attitude at the time of finding. The boy was found, the father kept his promise, and ever since 1643 the boy has remained in that "attitude." He has a tremendous wardrobe of costumes and honorary uniforms (on display in the Maison du Roi), including those of a U. S. sailor, an M.P., and a Doctor *Honoris Causa* of the Paris Sorbonne. He even has an impeccable satin suit actually given to him by Louis XV. He came through both World Wars magnificently. After the first one he was made an honorary corporal and was cited in these words (seen in French in the Maison du Roi):

"Surprised at his post in August, 1914, by the sudden invasion of the enemy, he received them with the utmost sang-froid, showing by his gesture his complete heedlessness of danger. As modest in triumph as he was strong in adversity, he remains today a model corporal, strict and faithful in the performance of his duty."

In World War II he was equally brave—and in the delightful fantasy of a French film, he was rewarded by Michael himself. The saint came down from his spire to talk to the

little boy and learned that he was tired sick of eternally standing on that corner "doing his duty." Michael invited him to go on a conducted tour of Brussels, the saint to stand all costs. The boy eagerly accepted and they had a wonderful day together. A real three-year-old of Ixelles (a suburb of Brussels) played the part of the Manneken and looked very much like him.

If Brussels is Belgium's national capital and seat of government, Antwerp and Liége are the respective racial capitals of the Flemings and Walloons who compose the nation. Antwerp has been an art center for centuries, whereas Liége has always been an industrial center. Antwerp is but thirty minutes' train ride from Brussels. Antwerp's trial by fire in the second World War came at the very end, under the terrible scourge of buzz bombs. But only one of Antwerp's dozen or more cultural monuments, the Musée Plantin-Moretus house where European printing was cradled, happened to lie in the path of a flying bomb. The cathedral, towering pride of Belgium, is intact, as are all the collections of art. Peter Paul Rubens, Antwerp's greatest son, painted or gave his name to a thousand canvases, and some scores of them, including the chief masterpiece, the Descent from the Cross (in the cathedral), draw visitors from all the world.

RUBENS' own house, on the street called Meir, has been completely reconstituted and was inaugurated in July, 1946, amid a great public fanfare.

No traveler should miss seeing a Belgian *Béguinage*, for each one is a perfect vignette of the Middle Ages. Picture houses or houselings, each named for a saint and each inhabited by a lace-making lay sister, surround a campus of cobblestones or grass. The Grand Béguinage of Bruges is deservedly the most famous. Its verdant campus, with a hundred tall elms in ten rows, is straight out of a book-of-pretty-pictures. It can't be real! But I personally prefer the lesser Béguinage of Lier, near Antwerp.

Art cities of Belgium, captained by many-canaled Bruges, which is a living embodiment of all that makes allure, are too numerous to list, but Ghent, most Flemish of them all, with a great Flemish-language university, is a must on every list except that of the Simon-pure Philistine. Its most celebrated painting, the Van Eyck brothers' Adoration of the Mystic Lamb, a fourteenth-century masterpiece which pioneered in oils, introducing that medium of art to Europe, has had an exceedingly checkered career. The Kaiser's Germany and Hitler's Germany both craved it with a strange ardor. Berlin long possessed two panels of it, in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, and in World War I Berlin tried almost desperately to secure the rest, but Belgians hid it too securely. In World War II it went to France for refuge and was finally tracked down and "acquired" by the Nazis. But in 1946 it came back to Ghent, whole and unhurt, and it is now the outstanding treasure of the Cathedral Church of St. Bavon.

Sheer holiday has two superlative strongholds in Belgium: the forty-mile littoral and the deep Ardennes, where the Battle of the Bulge went its ghastly way. Both sections were horribly hurt by the war. Every mile of the shore's forty is a broken bastion of Hitler's Fortress Europe, with endless concrete blockhouses and forts. But even war cannot ruin the hundreds of square miles of rich forest scenery that is the great charm of the Ardennes.

BASTOGNE, St. Vith, and Houffalize, all scenes of bitter fighting, are broken villages. Marloie, where a British bomber made a lucky hit on a munitions train in 1943, is *gone*. But most of the Ardennes villages are struggling back to normalcy. The Belgian Tourist Commissariat has brought out a new folder called Bastogne, the "Nuts" City, and Bastogne has named its market square Place General MacAuliffe to honor the man who here said "Nuts" to the Germans' demand for surrender. The general's classic *mot de Bastogne* has become a regular word in popular Belgian speech.

Belgium's effort at deflation is a most interesting thing to see and experience. The sign *10 per cent Diminution*, and in Flemish *10 per cent Vermindering*, literally covers the country. Every conceivable thing, from beer to postage stamps, seems to be included. Hotel prices were allowed to rise 100 per cent from 1939, and restaurant charges 170 per cent, but there they were stoutly held, and began to recede —by law. Black-market operations are rife and persons hostile to the whole deflation idea freely predict that "it will never work." But the program is a carefully devised and courageous one, and no "noble experiment" like our foredoomed attempt at prohibition. It is a part of Belgium's leadership in recovery and is one reason why—our State Department willing—you and I may enjoy Belgium *now*.

THE END

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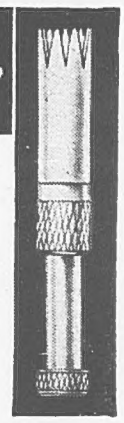

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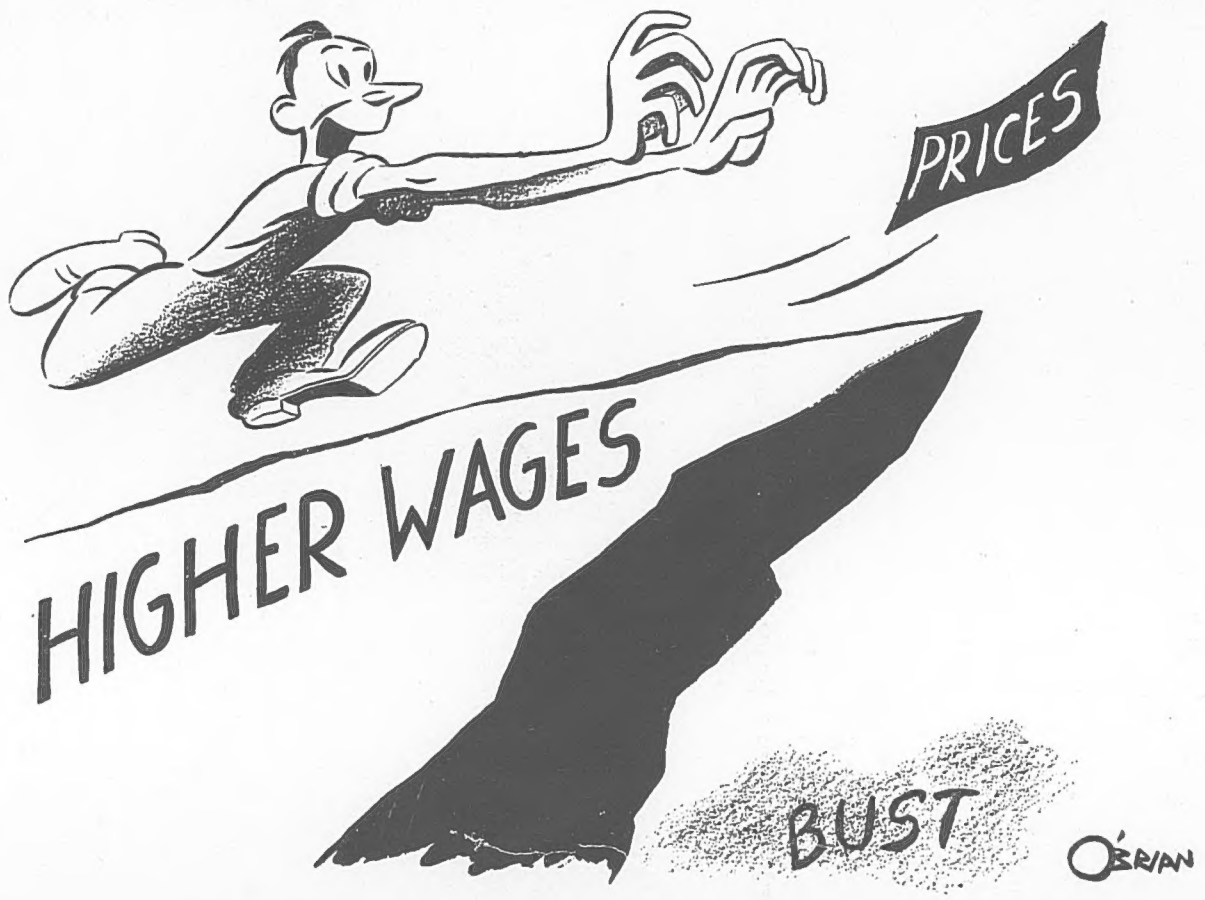
MILES NERVINE

BUT MILES NERVINE LEFT ME SERENE, MY TENSE NERVES RECONCILED.

DEC. 7, 1946

PAUL HUNTER
Publisher
EDWARD MAHER
Editor



DO HIGH PRICES JUSTIFY HIGHER WAGES?

ORGANIZED labor is in the process of formulating a demand for new wage increases because the cost of living has gone up. To the average workingman this seems like a valid enough reason why he ought to get a raise. It is not valid, because it will not work. More money will not improve his lot if prices are forced still higher because of it. He can benefit permanently only through progress to the over-all higher standard of living for everybody which is the continuing goal of America's free economy. Higher wages for labor to offset high prices can result only in still higher prices. Meanwhile, the unorganized majority—white-collar workers, civil employees, professional people, pensioners, small business men, etc.--will suffer.

Organized and disciplined unions will get theirs, but at everyone else's expense. But soon demand for the products of labor will be stifled by the higher prices which must be charged for these products. Fewer and fewer things will be made at higher and higher prices for the steadily shrinking number of people who can afford to pay for them. The end result: curtailed production, unemployment; eventually ruined industries and shattered unions.

The value of any man's labor is determined in the last analysis by what the ultimate consumer is willing to pay for the product of that labor. This is an unalterable truth. If a man demands more for his labor than it is worth, he soon runs out of work to do. If he is employed, his employer is forced to raise the price of the product he makes. If buyers won't pay, the employer soon has no business and the workingman no job. His higher wage scale does him no good if his job is thereby rendered nonexistent. A business can keep going only if it produces its product at a salable price.

Present living standards can be preserved or improved only by producing more.

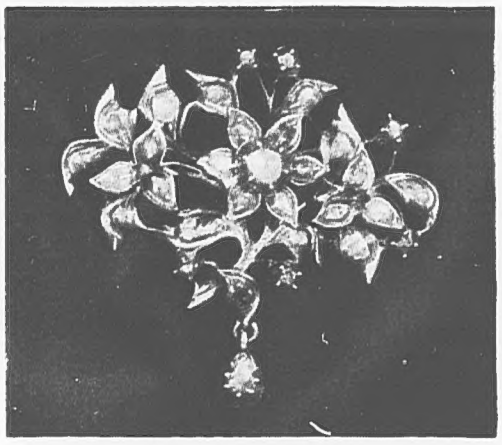
The more of a product produced per man hour, the cheaper it can be sold. The cheaper its price, the wider the demand for it. Thus the workingman's dollar can constantly buy more and more of a steadily increasing flood of things to eat or wear or use. The more produced, the more there is for him and everyone else to share. The less produced, the less there is for each, and the more it costs.

The answer to high prices is lower prices brought about by increased volume of production. Still higher prices which wage increases would cause might mean more wages for some temporarily, but they would also mean deepening misery for the great majority, and eventually a bust which would carry us all down together. Let's stop fighting and get to work.

Paul Hunter

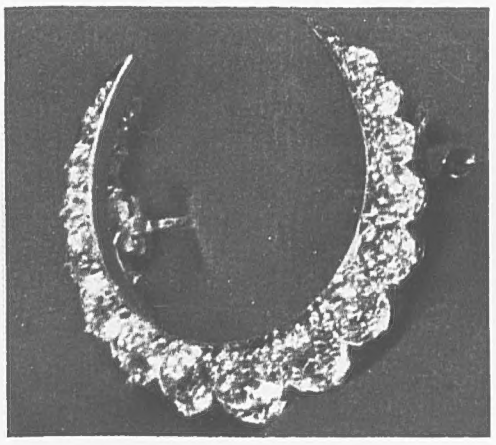
Liberty
...THE PRESERVATION OF FREEDOM IS THIS MAGAZINE'S PURPOSE

Do you know this about diamonds?

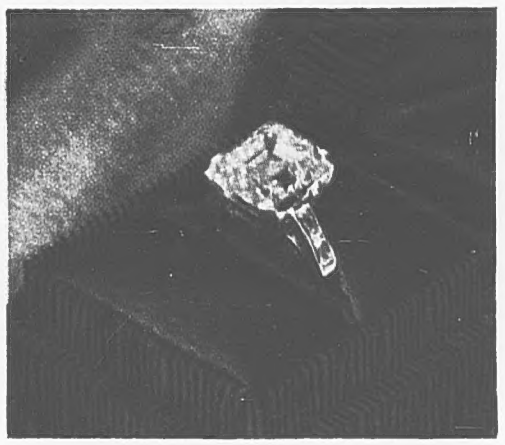


1800 Styles in diamonds change! Seven generations ago (just before the name Corby's came to Canada) diamonds were sometimes not cut, but simply polished as shown above. Diamonds were (and still are) weighed in carats, 142 carats equalling one ounce.

ANTIQUE JEWELS FROM THE MARCUS COLLECTION



1900 Diamond style in this year, Corby's 42nd as a great Canadian name, featured the "brilliant" cut of 58 facets. Each facet picks up sparkle, light and color. To assure maximum fire, "brilliant" cut diamonds should have two-thirds of their depth below the setting.



1934 Oblong cut was high style, in Corby's 76th year in Canada. This cut has 58 facets, but they reveal internal structure of the stone, which therefore must be perfect. Diamonds are classed perfect if magnified 10 times size with no visible flaw.

1946 People in the U. S. own four billion dollars worth of diamonds, one half the world's total. Diamonds have recognized value in every country. The name Corby's has international value, too. Coming to the U. S. from Canada five years ago, Corby's brings you a light, sociable whiskey that makes your favorite drink a real gem. Ask for the whiskey with the grand old Canadian name in your bar or store.

DIAMOND LEAF CLIP BY JOHN RUBEL—108 STONES

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PRODUCED IN U.S.A. *under the direct supervision of our expert Canadian blender*

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